RIVERSIDE BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

LEWIS AND CLARK

by

W. R. LIGHTON

RIVERSIDE BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

LEWIS AND CLARK

by

W. R. LIGHTON

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON
Archive
Collection

This book may not leave the Offices
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

The Riverside Biographical Series

ANDREW JACKSON, by W. G. Brown
JAMES B. EADS, by Louis How
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, by Paul E. More
PETER COOPER, by R. W. Raymond
THOMAS JEFFERSON, by H. C. Merwin
WILLIAM PENN, by George Hodges
GENERAL GRANT, by Walter Allen.
MERIWETHER LEWIS AND WILLIAM CLARK, by William R. Lighton.
JOHN MARSHALL, by James B. Thayer.

Each about 100 pages, 16mo, with photogravure portrait, 75 cents; *School Edition*, 50 cents, *net*

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO.
Boston and New York

The Riverside Biographical Series

NUMBER 8

LEWIS AND CLARK

BY

WILLIAM R. LIGHTON

Wm. Clark

Meriwether Lewis

LEWIS AND CLARK

MERIWETHER LEWIS

AND

WILLIAM CLARK

BY

WILLIAM R. LIGHTON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1901

COPYRIGHT, 1901, BY WILLIAM R. LIGHTON
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	Characteristics	1
II.	The Expedition	15
III.	Terms of the Commission	25
IV.	The Start	34
V.	With the Sioux	51
VI.	To the Falls of the Missouri	69
VII.	Over the Continental Divide	82
VIII.	The Last Stage of the Westward Journey	93
IX.	Winter on the Coast	107
X.	Homeward: In the Mountains	117
XI.	Recrossing the Divide	134
XII.	Home	142
XIII.	After Life	149

LEWIS AND CLARK

CHAPTER I

CHARACTERISTICS

In the years 1804, 1805, and 1806, two men commanded an expedition which explored the wilderness that stretched from the mouth of the Missouri River to where the Columbia enters the Pacific, and dedicated to civilization a new empire. Their names were Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

As a rule, one who tries to discover and to set down in order the simple signs that spell the story of a large man's life is confused by a chaos of data. No such trouble arises in this case. There is great poverty of fact and circumstance in the records of the private lives of these men; so careless were they of notoriety, so wholly did they

merge themselves in their work. Anything like ostentation was foreign to their taste, and to the spirit of their time, which took plain, dutiful heroism as a matter of course. No one knows any "characteristic anecdotes" of Meriwether Lewis; and the best stories about Clark are those preserved in the tribal histories of Western Indians. The separate identity of the two men is practically lost to all except the careful reader. Each had his baptismal name, to be sure; but even their private names are fused, and they are best known to us under the joint style of Lewis and Clark. In effect they were one and indivisible. For evidence of their individuality we must look to the labors which they performed in common.

When, several years after the conclusion of the great expedition, the manuscript journals were being prepared for publication, the editor could not find sufficient material out of which to make a memoir of Captain Lewis, and was forced to appeal to Mr. Jefferson for aid; for Jefferson had been an early neighbor and friend of the Lewis fam-

ily, and later, on becoming President, had made the lad Meriwether his private secretary, and had afterwards appointed him to direct the exploration. The sketch written by Mr. Jefferson is, like most of his papers, appreciative and vital. It is to this document, dated at Monticello, August 18, 1813, that every biographer must have recourse: —

"Meriwether Lewis, late governor of Louisiana, was born on the 18th of August, 1774, near the town of Charlottesville, in the county of Albemarle, in Virginia, of one of the distinguished families of that State. John Lewis, one of his father's uncles, was a member of the king's council before the Revolution. Another of them, Fielding Lewis, married a sister of General Washington. His father, William Lewis, was the youngest of five sons of Colonel Robert Lewis of Albemarle, the fourth of whom, Charles, was one of the early patriots who stepped forward in the commencement of the Revolution, and commanded one of the regiments first raised in Virginia, and placed on continental establishment. . . . Nicholas Lewis,

the second of his father's brothers, commanded a regiment of militia in the successful expedition of 1776 against the Cherokee Indians. . . . This member of the family of the Lewises, whose bravery was so usefully proved on this occasion, was endeared to all who knew him by his inflexible probity, courteous disposition, benevolent heart, and engaging modesty and manners. He was the umpire of all the private differences of his county, — selected always by both parties. He was also the guardian of Meriwether Lewis, of whom we are now to speak, and who had lost his father at an early age.

" He (Meriwether) continued some years under the fostering care of a tender mother, of the respectable family of Meriwethers, of the same county ; and was remarkable, even in infancy, for enterprise, boldness, and discretion.

" When only eight years of age he habitually went out in the dead of night, alone with his dogs, into the forest to hunt the raccoon and opossum, which, seeking their

food in the night, can then only be taken. In this exercise, no season or circumstance could obstruct his purpose — plunging through the winter's snows and frozen streams in pursuit of his object. At thirteen he was put to the Latin school, and continued at that until eighteen, when he was returned to his mother, and entered on the cares of his farm; having, as well as a younger brother, been left by his father with a competency for all the correct and comfortable purposes of temperate life. His talent for observation, which led him to an accurate knowledge of the plants and animals of his own country, would have distinguished him as a farmer; but at the age of twenty, yielding to the ardor of youth and a passion for more dazzling pursuits, he engaged as a volunteer in the body of militia which was called out by General Washington, on occasion of the discontents produced by the excise taxes in the western parts of the United States [the Whiskey Rebellion]; and from that station he was removed to the regular service as a lieutenant of the line.

At twenty-three he was promoted to a captaincy; and, always attracting the first attention where punctuality and fidelity were requisite, he was appointed paymaster to his regiment."

That is about all that is definitely known of Lewis's family and early life. It is not much; but it suffices to show that he came of fine, fearless stock, mettlesome and reliant, — the sort of stock that brings forth men of action. The invertebrate vanity of blood is kept out of this story, in accord with the democratic belief of the time that a strong man's ancestors are what he himself makes them. They may have done their part well, but it remains for him to put the finishing touches to their reputation. Given a few sturdy souls, quick and willing to serve in time of need, and that was enough of family distinction. Behavior, rather than pedigree, made the Lewis character.

When Captain Lewis was appointed to command the expedition, he had served Mr. Jefferson for two years as private secretary.

Concerning his fitness for public duties, Mr. Jefferson wrote : —

" I had now had opportunities of knowing him intimately. Of courage undaunted ; possessing a firmness and perseverance of purpose which nothing but impossibilities could divert from its direction ; careful as a father of those committed to his charge, yet steady in the maintenance of order and discipline ; intimate with the Indian character, customs, and principles ; habituated to the hunting life ; guarded, by exact observation of the vegetables and animals of his own country, against losing time in the description of objects already possessed ; honest, disinterested, liberal, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves — with all these qualifications, as if selected and implanted by Nature in one body for this express purpose, I could have no hesitation in confiding the enterprise to him. To fill up the measure desired, he wanted nothing but a greater familiarity with the technical lan-

guage of the natural sciences, and readiness in the astronomical observations necessary for the geography of his route. To acquire these, he repaired immediately to Philadeldelphia, and placed himself under the tutorage of the distinguished professors of that place, who, with a zeal and emulation enkindled by an ardent devotion to science, communicated to him freely the information requisite for the purposes of the journey. While attending at Lancaster to the fabrication of the arms with which he chose that his men should be provided, he had the benefit of daily communication with Mr. Andrew Ellicott, whose experience in astronomical observation, and practice of it in the woods, enabled him to apprise Captain Lewis of the wants and difficulties he would encounter, and of the substitutes and resources afforded by a woodland and uninhabited country."

It is plain that this astute judge of men reposed perfect confidence in his friend. From January, 1803, when Congress sanctioned the undertaking, until May, 1804,

when the party set out from St. Louis, the young officer had full charge of the intricate and difficult details of preparation. It was he who superintended the building of boats and the making of arms, accoutrements, scientific apparatus, and all equipment; and, what was of more importance, he selected the men who were to form his command. That was a nice matter. It would have been worse than useless to lead a company of fretful dissenters. The expedition was to be conducted on a military basis; but it was not ordinary field service; it was a mission for picked men. Much would depend upon each man's natural aptitude for his task; much more would depend upon the integrity of the corps as a whole. The consummate wisdom of Lewis's selection of his aids shines from every page of the journals. None of the men seemed to need instruction in the cardinal elements of conduct; each was as sensible of his trust as Lewis himself. It was in this spirit of the subordinates, rather than in the absolute authority of the captain, that success was to lie.

To guard against untoward accident, that might thwart the work, Lewis wished to have a companion in command. This pleased Mr. Jefferson, and the choice fell upon Captain William Clark.

William Clark was the ninth of a family of ten children. His father was John Clark, second, who, like his father before him, was a Virginian, living in King and Queen County. The pioneering spirit was strong in the family, — the *Wanderlust*, that keeps man's nature fluid and adaptable. This led John, second, to remove first to Albemarle County, and later to Caroline County, where William was born on August 1, 1770, not far from the birthplace of Meriwether Lewis.

When the boy was about fourteen years of age, the family moved once more, into the dim West, settling at the place now known as Louisville, in Kentucky. William's elder brother, George Rogers Clark, had preceded the others, and had built the first fortification against the Indians at the Falls of the Ohio, around which were clustered a few of

the rude dwellings of the frontiersmen. At this place, amidst the crudest conditions of the Kentucky border, the lad grew to maturity. That was not an orderly life; it was rather a continuing state of suspense, demanding of those who shared in it constant hardihood and fortitude. For the right-minded man, however, it had incalculable value. Many of the strongest examples of our national character have been men who owed the best that was in them to the apparently unkindly circumstances of their youth. What was denied to Clark in easy opportunity had ample compensation in the firmness and self-reliance which came from mastering difficulties.

To read Clark's letters and papers is to discover that his education in the politer branches of learning was as primitive as the surroundings of his home. It is plain that the training which prepared him for manhood was got mostly outside the schoolroom.

Like Lewis, he chose a military career. When he was but eighteen years of age, he was appointed ensign in the regular army;

and two years later he was made captain of militia in the town of Clarksville, "in the Territory of the United States North West of the Ohio River." In 1791 he was commissioned as a lieutenant of infantry, under Wayne, and served afterward as adjutant and quartermaster. Ill health led him to resign his commission in the army in 1796.

A few months before his resignation he first became acquainted with Meriwether Lewis, who, as an ensign, was put under his command. Then began one of those generous and enduring friendships that are all too rare amongst men. It is not known just what their private relations were in the mean time; but in 1803, upon Lewis's earnest solicitation, Captain Clark consented to quit his retirement upon his Kentucky farm and join in that work which was destined to be but the beginning of his real usefulness.

He comes to us out of the dark. We must forego intimate knowledge of his growth, being content with finding him full-grown and ready. No doubt his service in the army, where he was associated with

men of ability, had helped him to master many details of engineering craft, which he was to use in his later service. But this was at most incidental; his strength, his power to serve, was native, not acquired.

That they might share alike in all particulars of rank and responsibility in the expedition, it was understood that Lewis would endeavor to procure for Clark a captain's commission. Clark wrote to Nicholas Biddle (the editor of the journals) in 1811: —

"On these conditions I agreed to undertake the expedition made my arrangements, and set out, and proceeded on with Capt. Lewis to the mouth of the Missouri where we remained the winter 1803 made every necessary arrangement to set out early in spring 1804 everything arranged I waited with some anxiety for the commission which I had reason to expect (Capt. of Indioneers [Engineers]) a fiew days before I set out I received a Commission of 2d Lieutenant of Artillerist, my feelings on this occasion was as might be expected. I wished the expedition suckcess, and from the assur-

ence of Capt. Lewis that in every respect my situation command &c. &c. should be equal to his; viewing the Commission as mearly calculated to authorise punishment to the soldiers if necessary, I proceeded. No difficuelty took place on our rout relative to this point. . . ."

In the very nature of things, personal difficulty of a petty sort could not arise. Official rank was as nothing between them. They were capable and loyal; the morale of their party was ideal; and under their guidance was wrought out what has been well called our national epic of exploration.

CHAPTER II

THE EXPEDITION

For almost twenty years prior to the organization of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and long before the general public was more than passively curious upon the subject of Louisiana, Jefferson had nourished the plan for exploring the Louisiana Territory. In the memoir above referred to, he wrote : —

" While I resided in Paris, John Ledyard, of Connecticut, arrived there, well known in the United States for energy of body and mind. He had accompanied Captain Cook on his voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and distinguished himself on that voyage by his intrepidity. Being of a roaming disposition, he was now panting for some new enterprise. His immediate object at Paris was to engage a mercantile company in the fur trade of the western coast

of America, in which, however, he failed. I then proposed to him to go by land to Kamchatka, cross in some of the Russian vessels to Nootka Sound, fall down into the latitude of the Missouri, and penetrate to and through that to the United States. He eagerly seized the idea, and only asked to be assured of the permission of the Russian government."

The consent of the Empress of Russia was obtained, together with an assurance of protection while the course of travel lay across her territory; and Ledyard set out. While he was yet two hundred miles from Kamchatka, winter overtook him, and there he was forced to remain through many months. In the spring, as he was preparing to go on, he was put under arrest. The Empress, exercising the inalienable right of sovereign womanhood, had changed her mind. The reason for this change is not apparent. There may have been no reason more potent than international jealousy, which was lively in those days. At any rate, Ledyard was put into a close carriage and conveyed to

Poland, traveling day and night, without once stopping. He was left in Poland penniless and broken in body and spirit, and soon afterward died.

Later, in 1792, Jefferson proposed to the American Philosophical Society that a subscription be raised to engage some one to ascend the Missouri, cross the mountains, and descend to the Pacific. In order to preclude alarm to the Indians or to other nations, it was intended that this expedition should consist of only two persons. Meriwether Lewis, then eighteen years of age, begged to have this commission, and it was given him. His one companion was to be a French botanist, André Michaux. The journey was actually begun, when it was discovered that Michaux was residing in the United States in the capacity of a spy. Once again the plan was deferred.

"In 1803," wrote Mr. Jefferson, "the act for establishing trading houses with the Indian tribes being about to expire, some modifications of it were recommended to Congress by a confidential message of Janu-

ary 18th, and an extension of its views to the Indians of the Missouri. In order to prepare the way, the message proposed the sending an exploring party to trace the Missouri to its source, to cross the Highlands, and follow the best water communication which offered itself from thence to the Pacific Ocean. Congress approved the proposition, and voted a sum of money for carrying it into execution. Captain Lewis, who had then been near two years with me as private secretary, immediately renewed his solicitations to have the direction of the party."

Naturally, Mr. Jefferson was strongly inclined to intrust this work to his friend Lewis. Their official and private relations had been intimate; Mr. Jefferson had had ample opportunities for testing the fibre of the young man's character under strain; besides, Lewis's confidential position had no doubt made him acquainted with the inner details of the plan, its broader significance, and the political obstacles to be overcome in carrying it into effect. Aside from his

temperamental disposition for such an enterprise, his public service had strengthened his grasp of national interests; enthusiasm for adventure had been supplemented by maturity of judgment in affairs of state. Altogether, a better man for the place could not have been found.

To carry out the work of the organized expedition would consist largely in surmounting physical difficulties; but to organize it and get it fairly started demanded considerable delicacy of diplomatic contrivance. The life of the nation, as it sought to expand and take form, was beset and harassed, north, south, and west, by international complications growing out of direct contact with unfriendly neighbors. In that day the United States did not sustain cordial relations with any of the strong nations of the world. The internal machinery of the new government was not yet in perfect adjustment; domestic crises were constantly recurring; permanence of democratic forms and methods was not by any means assured; the country had not established an indispu-

table right to be reckoned with in matters of international concern. Russia alone, of all the powers, was considered as friendly. Even in that case, however, there was nothing warmer than watchful neutrality. Russian and American interests had not yet conflicted.

The British, through the strong trading companies of Canada, were hot for getting control of the Indian traffic of the Northwest — indeed, their prestige was already quite firmly fixed, and they were on their guard against any semblance of encroachment upon that domain of activity. This condition, coupled with other and acuter differences, made it highly probable that England would not take kindly to the expedition, should its object be openly avowed.

Spanish opposition would be even stronger. Spain had but lately surrendered possession of the Louisiana Territory, whence her agents had for a long time derived large revenues from the Indian trade, after the age-long manner she has pursued in dealing with her colonies and dependencies. Spain

still held the Floridas, practically controlling the commerce of the Gulf and the navigation of the Mississippi; so that, while the people of the United States asserted the right of dépôt at New Orleans and the further right of passage of the river throughout its length, their enjoyment of these rights was precarious. Further, though the crown had transferred the territory west of the Mississippi, its subjects had not quit their efforts for supremacy in trade; their influence long outlived the extinction of territorial rights. Bitterly hostile to the growth of American ideas, they would certainly do what they could to oppose the expedition.

It was with France, however, that our government had to deal directly. In 1800 Napoleon had acquired title to Louisiana, trading with Spain, giving in exchange the little kingdom of Etruria. But his control of the territory was more tacit than actual; he was so busily engaged at home that he found no time to reduce his property to possession; his dominion west of the Mississippi was never more than potential. War

between France and England was imminent. Napoleon had in America no adequate means for defending his new domain, which would therefore be likely to fall into the hands of the British at once upon the outbreak of war. He was growing anxious to be rid of the load. Jefferson thought it probable that the territory would one day belong to the United States, — indeed, negotiations were pending for the transfer when the "confidential communication" to Congress was written, in January, 1803. Although the outcome was still problematical, Jefferson considered that the proper time for discovering what the land held; and this was the primary purpose of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

For all of these reasons, and more, it was deemed necessary to cover from general view the real character of the enterprise. The appropriation by Congress was made for the ostensible and innocent purpose of "extending the external commerce of the United States." In his letter to Congress, which was for a long time kept secret, Mr. Jefferson said that France would regard this as in the

nature of a "literary pursuit," and that whatever distrust she might feel would be allayed. But, though his ulterior purposes were sought to be concealed, the powers of France no doubt knew well enough what was in the wind.

It was on June 30, 1803, that Jefferson gave to Captain Lewis detailed instructions for the conduct of his work. In the meantime (on April 30th), treaties had been signed at Paris, ceding Louisiana to the United States. That was a distinct triumph for American statecraft. On the one hand were ranged Napoleon, Talleyrand, and Marbois; on the other, Jefferson, Livingston, and Monroe. The French were at a disadvantage; their position was that of holding perishable goods, which must be sold to avoid catastrophe. Napoleon said, not without reason, that the government of the United States availed itself of his distress incident to the impending struggle with England. However that may be, the territory changed owners for a consideration of $15,000,000.

Formal notification of the transfer was

not received in Washington until the early part of July, when active preparations for the exploration were being made. Its receipt did not alter the character of the expedition, though many of the international complications were dissipated. Thereafter the work was purely domestic in most of its aspects.

CHAPTER III

TERMS OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Jefferson's instructions to the young officer showed his own farsighted earnestness. Had he who received them been any less in earnest, the task assigned to him must have seemed appalling. The primary instruction was to blaze a path, more than four thousand miles long, through an unstudied wilderness. It was conceived that this could best be done by following the Missouri to its head waters, crossing "the Highlands" to the navigable waters of the Columbia, and going down that river to the Pacific; but this was only conjectural. The map in the hands of the explorers, the only basis for a preliminary outline of their route, was drawn partly from hearsay, partly from imagination; it showed the source of the Missouri to be somewhere in Central California; it showed nothing of the mighty

barrier of the Rocky Mountains. There was one thin, uncertain line of hills, far to the west, that might have been the Sierra Nevadas; further than that there was nothing but a broad interior plain, seamed with rivers. Practically nothing was known of the difficulties that would be encountered. White men had ventured for a little way up the Missouri in earlier years, to carry on a desultory fur-trade with the Indians; but these traders had been mostly happy-go-lucky Frenchmen, who had taken but little thought for the morrow. They had no trustworthy information to give that would be of service to scientific travelers. So far as sure knowledge of it was concerned, the land was virgin, and Lewis and Clark were to be its discoverers.

They were directed to explore it in detail. Observations of latitude and longitude were to be made at all points of particular interest. The native nations and tribes encountered along the way were to be studied with care, and record preserved of their names and numbers; the extent and bound-

aries of their possessions; their relations with other tribes and nations; their language, traditions, and monuments; their occupations, implements, food, clothing, and domestic accommodations; their diseases and methods of cure; their physical, social, moral, and religious peculiarities and customs; their ideas and practice of commerce, and the possibility of extending among them the influences of civilization, — in short, every circumstance was to be noted which might render future relations with these people intelligent. Particular attention was to be given to the state of feeling toward the whites, in those tribes which had had experience with the traders. Should the expedition succeed in reaching the Pacific, the conditions of trade upon the coast were to form a subject of special inquiry. Along the route full observations were directed to be made concerning the face of the country, — the contour of the land; the character and course of streams, their suitability as avenues of commerce, and the means of communication between them; and also the

points best adapted to the establishment of trading-stations and fortifications. The conditions of agricultural development were to be noted as fully as might be, — soil, water-supply, climate, and change of seasons; and also the natural resources of the country, vegetable, animal, and mineral. Nothing was to be neglected, knowledge of which might contribute to the success or security of later enterprise.

"In all your intercourse with the natives," wrote Mr. Jefferson, "treat them in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit; allay all jealousies as to the object of your journey; satisfy them of its innocence; make them acquainted with the position, extent, character, peaceable and commercial dispositions of the United States; of our wish to be neighborly, friendly, and useful to them, and of our dispositions to a commercial intercourse with them; confer with them on the points most convenient as mutual emporiums, and the articles of most desirable interchange for them and us. If a few of

their influential chiefs, within practicable distance, wish to visit us, arrange such a visit with them, and furnish them with authority to call on our officers, on their entering the United States, to have them conveyed to this place at the public expense. If any of them should wish to have some of their people brought up with us, and taught such arts as may be useful to them, we will receive, instruct, and take care of them."

As it could not be foreseen in what manner the travelers would be received by the Indians, whether with hospitality or hostility, Captain Lewis was told to use his own discretion as to persevering with the enterprise in the face of opposition; and he was also told that should he succeed in getting through to the Pacific, he might choose his own means for getting back again, — shipping by way of Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope, if chance offered; or, in the absence of such opportunity, returning overland. A precious liberty, truly, when read in the light of the facts. The instructions concluded with this frank paragraph: —

"As you will be without money, clothes, or provisions, you must endeavor to use the credit of the United States to obtain them; for which purpose open letters of credit shall be furnished you, authorizing you to draw on the executive of the United States, or any of its officers, in any part of the world in which drafts can be disposed of, and to apply with our recommendations to the consuls, agents, merchants, or citizens of any nation with which we have intercourse, assuring them in our name that any aids they may furnish you shall be honorably repaid, and on demand."

As events transpired, that paragraph was almost ironical. A letter of credit directed to the Man in the Moon would have served quite as well.

The two redoubtable captains were to be soldiers, sailors, explorers, geographers, ethnologists, botanists, geologists, chemists, diplomats, missionaries, financiers, and historians; also cooks, tailors, shoemakers, hunters, trappers, fishermen, scouts, woodcutters, boatbuilders, carpenters, priests, and doctors.

From the time they left St. Louis, in May, 1804, until they returned to that place, in September, 1806, the men were cut off from civilization and all its aids, and left to work out their own salvation. Not for one moment were they dismayed; not in a single particular did they fail to accomplish what had been assigned to them.

The congressional appropriation for the purposes of the expedition was based upon an estimate made by Captain Lewis himself, which is so refreshing as to deserve literal quotation: —

Recapitulation of an estimate of the sum necessary to carry into effect the Miss^ie Expedicion

Mathematical Instruments	$217
Arms and accoutrements extraordinary	81
Camp Ecquipage	255
Medicine and packing	55
Means of transportation	430
Indian presents	696
Provisions extraordinary	224
Materials for making up the various articles into portable packs	55

For the pay of hunters, guides and interpreters	300
In silver coin, to defray the expences of the party from Nashville to the last white settlement on the Missisourie	100
Contingencies	87
Total	$2500

Eighty-seven dollars for the contingencies of a twenty-eight months' journey of discovery, more than eight thousand miles in length, with a company of forty-five men, and through a land literally unknown!

Captain Lewis set out from Washington in July, 1803, and was joined by Captain Clark at Louisville, whence they proceeded to the rendezvous on the Mississippi, near St. Louis. They intended to embark upon their course in the autumn; but several delays occurred, of one sort and another, and the party was not assembled until December. The officers wished to establish winter quarters at the last white settlement on the Missouri, a few miles above St. Louis; but the Spanish governor of the territory had not yet learned of the change in ownership, and

would not suffer them to proceed. This compelled them to remain in the lower camp until spring. The winter months were not lost, however; they were passed in drilling and instructing the men in the details of the work before them, thus greatly increasing their efficiency and no doubt obviating delays at later times.

CHAPTER IV

THE START

As it was first organized, the party consisted of twenty-nine members, — the two officers, nine young Kentuckians, fourteen soldiers of the regular army who had volunteered to accompany the expedition, two French watermen, an interpreter and hunter, and a negro servant of Captain Clark. At St. Louis there were sixteen additional recruits, — an Indian hunter and interpreter, and fifteen boatmen, who were to go as far as the villages of the Mandan Nation. This brought the total to forty-five.

A broadly inclusive statement must suffice to characterize the non-commissioned men. They were brave, sturdy, able; amenable to discipline, yet full of original resource; ideal subordinates, yet almost every one fitted by nature for command, if occasion should arise. They proved themselves

equal to all emergencies. At least five of these men kept journals, and no better index to their character need be asked than that afforded by the manuscript records. If ever there was temptation to color and adorn a narrative with the stuff that makes travelers' tales attractive, it was here; yet in none of the journals is there to be found a departure from plain, simple truth-telling. Their matter-of-fact tone would render them almost commonplace, if the reader did not take pains to remember what it all meant. Nowhere is there anything like posing for effect; the nearest approach to it is in the initial entry in the diary of that excellent Irishman, Private Patrick Gass, — and parts of this have been branded as apocryphal, the interpolation of an enthusiastic editor: —

"On Monday, 14 of May, 1804, we left our establishment at the mouth of the River du Bois, or Wood River, a small river which falls into the Mississippi, on the east side, a mile below the Missouri, and having crossed the Mississippi proceeded up the Missouri

on our intended voyage of discovery, under the command of Captain Clarke. Captain Lewis was to join us in two or three days on our passage. . . . The expedition was embarked on board a batteau and two periogues. The day was showery, and in the evening we encamped on the north bank, six miles up the river. Here we had leisure to reflect on our situation, and the nature of our engagements: and as we had all entered this service as volunteers, to consider how far we stood pledged for the success of an expedition which the government had projected; and which had been undertaken for the benefit and at the expence of the Union: of course of much interest and high expectation.

"The best authenticated accounts informed us that we were to pass through a country possessed by numerous, powerful, and warlike nations of savages, of gigantic stature, fierce, treacherous, and cruel; and particularly hostile to white men. And fame had united with tradition in opposing mountains to our course, which human en-

terprize and exertion would attempt in vain to pass. The determined and resolute character, however, of the corps, and the confidence which pervaded all ranks dispelled every emotion of fear and anxiety for the present; while a sense of duty, and of the honor which would attend the completion of the object of the expedition; a wish to gratify the expectations of the government, and of our fellow-citizens, with the feelings which novelty and discovery invariably inspire, seemed to insure to us ample support in our future toils, suffering, and danger."

In Captain Clark's journal there is nothing of this sort. The opening entry is a bare memorandum of latitude and longitude, a note as to the appearance of the river banks, and a statement of the number of miles covered during the day, — a memorable achievement in modesty.

Of the boats in which the party was embarked, the batteau was a keel-vessel fifty-five feet in length, carrying a large square sail, and manned by twenty-two oars. In the bow and stern, ten-foot decks formed

forecastle and cabin; and in the middle part were lockers, whose tops could be raised to form a line of breastworks along either gunwale, in case of attack from Indians. The "periogues" were open boats, manned by six and seven oars. Besides these conveyances for the men and baggage, horses were led along the banks of the river, to be used by the hunters in their daily occupations and for service in emergency. The officers had observed the wise rule of travelers, and had sought to simplify their equipment to the last degree.

The name of Lower Missouri attached to that part of the river between its mouth and the entrance of the Platte. Over so much of the route the expedition passed quietly. A few notes from the journals will suffice to show the nature of the daily labors.

May 16th the party stopped at the village of St. Charles, a typical French settlement of the frontier, twenty-one miles above St. Louis; and under that date occurs this admirable note: —

"The inhabitants, about 450 in number,

are chiefly descendants from the French of Canada. In their manners they unite all the careless gayety and amiable hospitality of the best times of France. Yet, like most of their countrymen in America, they are but little qualified for the rude life of the frontier, — not that they are without talent, for they possess much natural genius and vivacity; not that they are destitute of enterprise, for their hunting excursions are long, laborious, and hazardous; but their exertions are all desultory; their industry is without system and without perseverance. The surrounding country, therefore, though rich, is not generally well cultivated; the inhabitants chiefly subsist by hunting and trade with the Indians, and confine their culture to gardening, in which they excel."

It would be difficult to find a juster or more accurate characterization of the French as pioneers. Although in the early days of settlement along the Mississippi and its tributaries they outnumbered the people of other nations, they made no deep impression. They got along admirably while they were sus-

tained by the tonic-stimulus of excitement and variety; but when that was removed, they found the conquest of even the richest of lands too dull for their tastes. Lacking stability of nature, they could not achieve solid results in prosaic labor. They did not so much as lay a foundation for the serious builders of after years.

May 22d, in camp on Good Man's River, the party made its first trade with Indians. Some Kickapoos were engaged to procure provisions; they brought in four deer, and were given in return two quarts of whiskey, which they considered ample requital.

"May 25th. . . . Stopped for the night at the entrance of a creek on the north side, called by the French La Charette, ten miles from our last camp, and a little above a small village of the same name. It consists of seven small houses, and as many poor families, who have fixed themselves here for the convenience of trade. They form the last establishment of whites on the Missouri."

La Charette was one of the earliest colo-

nies, and famous as the far western home of Daniel Boone. There that immortal frontiersman passed the last years of his life, in the sweet luxury of quiet and freedom; and there he died in the year 1820.

Throughout those first weeks the journals breathe content. Every man was abundantly pleased with his work and his lot; game was plentiful, in great variety; the difficulties to be overcome were no more than those attending the navigation of a swift and turbulent river, whose erratic channel was filled with sand-bars and dead timber. The travelers were enjoying a typical prairie season of the lower altitudes, which makes an ideal setting for outdoor life. Here and there they came in contact with friendly bands of Indians; occasionally they encountered boats upon the river, manned by traders, who were drifting with the current to St. Louis, bearing the plunder of a season's traffic. Upon the banks of the stream were many tokens of the inconstancy of purpose of the border life, — abandoned sites of Indian villages and deserted fortifications that had been

erected by traders to serve for temporary convenience and protection. Nowhere was there a sign of the American interpretation of the word "enterprise."

On June 26th they reached the mouth of the Kansas River, now marked by Kansas City. There they camped for two days; there they fell in with the Kansas Indians, with whom they held a pacific conference; and there the hunters met for the first time with buffalo. Forty-three days had been consumed in crossing what is now the State of Missouri.

July 26th camp was made at the mouth of the Platte River, six hundred miles from St. Louis, where the town of Plattsmouth, Neb., stands; and that date marked a radical change in the duties and conduct of the expedition. The disposition of the Indians of the Lower Missouri was already pretty well known, so that no time had been spent in establishing relations with them. They were still mostly unspoiled savages, to be sure; but they were acquainted with the appearance of the whites, at least, and their bearing

toward traders and colonists had been for the most part decent. But the situation upon the Upper Missouri was altogether different. Although the problem might not be definitely stated, because many of its factors were unknown, it could be foreseen that a solution would tax the genius of civilization. The dominant nations of the plains Indians — those whose numerical strength and warlike character made them feared by their neighbors — had their domain above the Platte. The Sioux in particular had a mighty reputation, established by treachery and ferocity in war. Their history recorded a constant succession of cruel wars, most of which had had no justification save in arrogance and bloody-mindedness. They did not want to live at peace; for peace signified to them a state of craven inanition. The mission of Lewis and Clark was directed pointedly against that manner of behavior; they were not only to secure themselves against hostility, but were also to endeavor to reconcile the warring tribes and nations to one another. That was an undertaking calling for a high degree of tact and courage.

From a camp a few miles above the Platte, where the party remained for several days, messengers were sent to the villages of the Pawnees and Otoes, fifty miles to the westward, bearing gifts, with an invitation to a council. Through wars and other disasters, the Otoes were then much reduced in numbers, as in almost every item of the savage code of efficiency and independence. In their weakened state they had formed an alliance with the Pawnees, — a primitive adaptation of the idea of a protectorate. The Pawnees had considerable strength, and they were in character much above the Indian average, living in permanent villages, where they sustained themselves by cultivating cornfields and hunting the buffalo.

After carefully reconnoitring the lower Platte valley and the surrounding country, the expedition passed onward, traveling slowly to allow the Indians to overtake them. On the 27th they passed the present site of Omaha; and on the 30th encamped at a point twelve or fifteen miles to the north. It was this camp, pitched where

the village of Calhoun, Neb., now stands, that received the name of Council Bluff, which was later appropriated by an Iowa town. Here, on August 2d, appeared a small band of Otoes and Missouris, with a Frenchman who resided among them. Presents were exchanged, and the officers requested a council upon the following morning.

"August 3d. This morning the Indians, with their six chiefs, were all assembled under an awning formed with the mainsail, in presence of all our party, paraded for the occasion. A speech was then made announcing to them the change in the government, our promise of protection, and advice as to their future conduct. All the six chiefs replied to our speech, each in his turn, according to rank. They expressed their joy at the change in the government; their hopes that we would recommend them to their Great Father (the President), that they might obtain trade and necessaries; they wanted arms as well for hunting as for defense, and asked our mediations between them and the Mahas, with whom they are

now at war. We promised to do so, and wished some of them to accompany us to that nation, which they declined, for fear of being killed by them. We then proceeded to distribute our presents. The grand chief of the nation not being of the party, we sent him a flag, a medal, and some ornaments for clothing. To the six chiefs who were present, we gave a medal of the second grade to one Otoe chief and one Missouri chief; a medal of the third grade to two inferior chiefs of each nation — the customary mode of recognizing a chief being to place a medal round his neck, which is considered among his tribe as a proof of his consideration abroad. Each of these medals was accompanied by a present of paint, garters, and cloth ornaments of dress; and to these we added a canister of powder, a bottle of whiskey, and a few presents to the whole, which appeared to make them perfectly satisfied. The air-gun, too, was fired, and astonished them greatly. . . ."

This was the first important conference with the natives. If it was not rich in results,

it served at least the temporary purpose of putting these allied tribes in a good humor by satisfying their sense of their own dignity. Nothing more was to be expected. It is well to say outright, as a commentary upon all meetings such as this, that no council with Indians, however ceremonious or solemn, has results more permanent than those which attend the purely diplomatic relations of civilized nations.

In all our intercourse with the Indians, from the very beginning, too much stress has been laid upon the importance and the binding obligation of formal pow-wows. We have been unduly conscious of our own cunning, while undervaluing the craft that is native to all wild peoples; we have too often lost sight of the one really imperative element in any compact that is to be effective and enduring, — mutuality of honorable purpose. Most men, whether civilized or savage, can appreciate honest motives and behavior; and so can they detect dishonest wiles and artifices. Lewis and Clark knew well enough what was before them. The In-

dians' past experience with the light-minded French and the evil-minded Spanish adventurers of the border had left a deep impression; it had made them wary, if not distrustful, of white men's protestations. This impression was not to be removed by merely sitting around in a circle and making speeches; it could only be removed by long and intimate association in the affairs of actual life. If the whites meant well, they would do well, argued the Indians. To do well was a matter of time. The most that Lewis and Clark hoped for was to establish peace with the natives, to prepare the way for confidence and trust. Meanwhile they knew that they would need to be constantly upon their guard.

On August 19th one of the non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Charles Floyd, was taken ill, and on the next day he died. This was the only death to occur in the party throughout the course of the expedition.

The entries in Captain Clark's journals for those two days are thoroughly characteristic of him: —

"August 19. . . . Serjeant Floyd is taken verry bad all at once with a Biliose Chorlick we attempt to reliev him without success as yet, he gets worse and we are much allarmed at his situation, all attention to him. . . ."

"August 20. . . . Sergeant Floyd much weaker and no better. . . . Died with a great deel of composure, before his death he said to me 'I am going away I want you to write me a letter.' We buried him on the top of the bluff one-half mile below a small river to which we gave his name, he was buried with the Honors of War much lamented, a seeder post with the Name Sergt. C. Floyd died here 20th August, 1804, was fixed at the head of his grave — This man at all times gave us proofs of his firmness and Determined resolution to doe service to his countrey and honor to himself after paying all the honor to our Decesed brother we camped in the mouth of floyds river about thirty yards wide, a butifull evening."

Upon the death of Floyd, Private Patrick Gass was made a sergeant, — a wise choice, determined by the votes of the men.

Besides the death of Floyd, but one other incident occurred in the twenty-eight months to affect the integrity of the corps. A man had deserted on August 4th; two weeks later he had been recaptured; and for the 28th there is this entry in Captain Clark's journal: —

"Proceeded to the trial of Reed, he confessed that he 'deserted & Stold a public Rifle shot-pouch Powder & Ball' and requested we would be as favorable to him as we could consistently with our Oathes — which we were and only sentenced him to run the gantlet four times through the Party and that each man with 9 switchies should punish him & for him not to be considered in future as one of the Party."

So stanch were the men in their allegiance, and so trustworthy in the performance of their duties, that in only one other place in all the journals is there mention of an act of discipline.

CHAPTER V

WITH THE SIOUX

Toward the end of August the party reached the Sioux country. Some of the tribes of this nation were known to be friendly toward the whites, while others had acquired a manner overbearing and insolent, inspired by the inferior numbers of the traders who had visited them in the past, and by the subservient attitude which these had assumed. From such tribes there was good reason to anticipate opposition, or even open hostility. But the specific nature of their mission made the officers desirous of a personal meeting with all tribes, irrespective of their past reputation. There is a saying familiar to Western folk: "Show an Indian that you are afraid of him, and he will give you reason for fear." The travelers were not afraid. They adopted the custom of the traders and set fire to the dry grasses of the

prairie, intending that the smoke should notify the Indians of their approach and summon them to the river. Shortly before this they had encountered upon the river one Pierre Dorion, a half-breed son of the notable Old Dorion, whose fame is celebrated in Irving's "Astoria." This man was then on his way to St. Louis, but was persuaded to return with the expedition to his home among the Sioux, there to act as interpreter and intermediary, in which service he proved useful.

Relations with the Sioux began on the 29th of August. The meeting was attended with elaborate ceremonies. One of the non-commissioned officers was dispatched with Dorion to a village twelve miles distant from the camp, taking presents of tobacco, corn, and cooking utensils. In view of the later history of the Sioux, and because of the intrinsic charm of the narrative, the story of this encounter is quoted at length from Mr. Biddle's well-edited version: —

"August 29th. . . . Sergeant Pryor reported that on reaching their village, he was

met by a party with a buffalo-robe, on which they desired to carry their visitors, — an honor which they declined, informing the Indians that they were not the commanders of the boats. As a great mark of respect, they were then presented with a fat dog, already cooked, of which they partook heartily, and found it well flavored. . . .

"August 30th. . . . We prepared a speech and some presents, and then sent for the chiefs and warriors, whom we received, at twelve o'clock, under a large oak tree, near which the flag of the United States was flying. Captain Lewis delivered a speech, with the usual advice and counsel for their future conduct. We acknowledged their chiefs, by giving to the grand chief a flag, a medal, a certificate, and a string of wampum; to which we added a chief's coat — that is, a richly laced uniform of the United States Artillery corps, with a cocked hat and red feather. One second chief and three inferior ones were made or recognized by medals, a suitable present of tobacco, and articles of clothing. We smoked the pipe of peace, and the

chiefs retired to a bower formed of bushes by their young men, where they divided among one another the presents, smoked, eat, and held a council on the answer which they were to make us to-morrow. The young people exercised their bows and arrows in shooting at marks for beads, which we distributed to their best marksmen. In the evening the whole party danced until a late hour, and, in the course of their amusement, we threw among them some knives, tobacco, bells, tape, and binding, with which they were much pleased. . . .

"August 31st. In the morning, after breakfast, the chiefs met and sat down in a row, with pipes of peace highly ornamented; all pointed toward the seats intended for Captains Lewis and Clark. When they arrived and were seated, the grand chief, whose Indian name Weucha is in English Shake Hand, and in French is called Le Liberateur (The Deliverer), rose and spoke at some length, approving what we had said, and promising to follow our advice. 'I see before me,' said he, 'my Great Father's two

sons. You see me and the rest of our chiefs and warriors. We are very poor; we have neither powder, nor ball, nor knives; and our women and children at the village have no clothes. I wish that as my brothers have given me a flag and a medal, they would give something to those poor people, or let them stop and trade with the first boat which comes up the river. I will bring chiefs of the Pawnees and Mahas together, and make peace between them; but it is better that I should do it than my Great Father's sons, for they will listen to me more readily. I will also take some chiefs to your country in the Spring; but before that time I cannot leave home. I went formerly to the English, and they gave me a medal and some clothes; when I went to the Spanish, they gave me a medal, but nothing to keep it from my skin; but now you give me a medal and clothes. But still we are poor; and I wish, brothers, that you would give us something for our squaws.'

. . . "They promised to make peace with the Otoes and Missouris, the only nations

with whom they are now at war. All these harangues concluded by describing the distress of the nation; they begged us to have pity on them; to send them traders; they wanted powder and ball, and seemed anxious that we should supply them with some of their Great Father's milk, the name by which they distinguished ardent spirits."

These were the Yanktons, one of the important tribes of the great Sioux nation. The Yanktons have always been known to the whites as a people of distinction, shrewd, artful, good hunters, good fighters, and altogether quite able to take care of themselves. In their inmost hearts, they were vain of their prestige amongst their inferior neighbors; nor did they really acknowledge the superiority of the whites. Their speeches must be taken as declarations of momentary policy, and not of fixed principles. Further, they did not express the thought of the tribe as a whole, but only the inclinations of those chiefs who were for the time in authority, and whose word was for that time the tribal law. The bearing of the Yanktons, as of

almost every other Indian tribe, has been modified or altogether changed, time and again, under the will of successive chiefs.

The attention of the expedition was not wholly engrossed with the Indians. From day to day the journals are filled with careful and valuable notes upon the natural history and physical geography of the land, about which nothing had as yet been written. Under the date of September 7th there occurs a good description of the prairie-dog; and on the 17th the antelope of the Western plains was described. Both of these animals were then unknown to science.

September 25th the party walked close to the edge of catastrophe, when they met with another tribe of the Sioux, — the Tetons. This was the first occasion for an exhibition of the fighting temper of the men. In describing the encounter, Captain Clark's journal is as usual picturesque and graphic: —

"Envited the Chiefs on board to show them our boat & such curiossities as was strange to them, we gave them ¼ a glass of whiskey which they appeared to be verry

fond of, sucked the bottle after it was out & soon began to be troublesom, one the 2d chief assumeing Drunkness, as a Cloaki for his rascally intentions. I went with those chiefs (which left the boat with great reluctiance) to shore with a view of reconseleing those men to us, as soon as I landed the Perogue three of their young men seased the cable of the Perogue, the chiefs soldr. Huged the mast, and the 2d chief was verry insolent both in words & justures declareing I should not go on, stateing he had not received presents sufficient from us, his justures were of such a personal nature I felt myself compeled to Draw my sword, at this motion Capt Lewis ordered all under arms in the boat, those with me also showed a disposition to Defend themselves and me, the grand chief then took hold of the roap & ordered the young warrers away, I felt myself warm & spoke in very positive terms. We proceeded about 1 mile & anchored out off a willow Island placed a guard on shore to protect the Cooks & a guard in the boat, fastened the Perogues to the boat, I call this Island Bad Humered Island as we were in a bad humer."

The journals for the next day say: —

"Our conduct yesterday seemed to have inspired the Indians with fear of us, and as we were desirous of cultivating their acquaintance, we complied with their wish that we should give them an opportunity of treating us well, and also suffer their squaws and children to see us and our boat, which would be perfectly new to them. Accordingly . . . we came to on the south side, where a crowd of men, women and children were waiting to receive us. Captain Lewis went on shore and remained several hours; and observing that their disposition was friendly, we resolved to remain during the night for a dance, which they were preparing for us."

The two officers were received on shore by ten well-dressed young men, who took them up in a decorated robe and carried them in state to the council-house. There the pipe of peace was smoked, a ceremonious dog-feast was prepared; the chieftains delivered themselves of speeches, divided between fawning adulation and flamboyant boasting; and then came a sort of state

ball, which continued until midnight. The next morning the travelers were suffered to proceed.

That was a notable encounter. The Tetons have always been counted among the most irresponsible villains of their race, treacherous by first impulse, murderous by strongest inclination, thievish according to opportunity, combining the effrontery of Italian beggars with the boldness begotten by their own sanguinary history. Yet this determined little band faced them in the heart of their own land, and overawed them.

For many days thereafter, parties of the Tetons appeared from time to time upon the river banks, following the boats, begging, threatening, doing everything in their power to harass the advance. No doubt they had already repented of their brief show of decency, and would have made an open demonstration had they dared. Through those days the men generally encamped upon islands or sand-bars in mid-stream, deeming it wise to avoid further contact with the

tribe. It was a decided relief to get beyond their territory.

On October 10th they reached the land of the Ricaras, a tribe whose conduct, in all domestic and foreign relations, was in striking contrast to that of the Sioux, and indeed almost unique. The Ricaras could not be induced to drink whiskey!

Soon after the arrival at the Ricara villages, one of the privates was tried by court-martial for some act of insubordination, and was sentenced to be publicly whipped. The execution of the sentence "affected the Indian chief very sensibly, for he cried aloud during the punishment." When the matter was explained to him, "he acknowledged that examples were necessary, and that he himself had given them by punishing with death; but his nation never whipped even children from their birth." Universal sobriety, and compassionate tears from the eyes of a warrior! Surely, that tribe was curious.

By the last of October the travelers came to the camps of the Mandans and Minneta-

rees, 1600 miles from St. Louis; and there, being warned by the calendar and by cold, they prepared to take up winter quarters. Their first care was to find a suitable place for building log cabins and fortifications. With this work the men were engaged until November 20th, when Fort Mandan was completed and occupied.

Meanwhile, the officers had sought to extend acquaintance among the Indians, and to establish confidence and bring them into sympathy with the new conditions of government. So far as pledges were concerned, they were fairly successful; the Indians received them hospitably.

The Mandans had once been a powerful nation, living in numerous villages down the river; but continued wars with the Sioux, coupled with sad ravages of the small-pox, had reduced them to an insignificant number, and compelled them to remove out of easy reach of their strongest enemies. When Lewis and Clark came upon them, they formed only a trifling souvenir of their past grandeur; they had then but two poor vil-

lages at this remote site, where they lived in a precarious hand-to-mouth fashion, having no allies but a small force of Minnetarees near by.

But Fate had managed the matter very well, no doubt, in depriving these people of effective strength in war; for at this time the head chief of the Minnetaree villages was a man who, given opportunity, would have made the river run red with the blood of his enemies. This was Le Borgne, a one-eyed old despot, of surpassing cruelty and bloodthirstiness, whose very name, even in his present position, would compel a shiver of apprehension. A chief such as he, at the head of forces matched to his ferocious desires, would have changed the history of the Upper Missouri. As it was, he spent most of his villainous instincts for his own private amusement, — occasionally slaughtering one of his warriors who had given him displeasure, or butchering a couple of his wives whose society had grown irksome; and between times he leered with his solitary evil eye upon the traders, contriving ways

for getting whiskey with which to bait his passions. The British traders of the Hudson Bay and Northwest companies had long before secured a strong foothold in this territory, and had sought by every means to monopolize the traffic. The ubiquitous French were there also, domiciled in the villages, and some of them had taken squaws to wife. With schooling from such as these, old Le Borgne had cut his wisdom teeth; he had made himself master of many low tricks and subtleties practiced by white traders and vagabonds; he was as skillful as the best of them in making promises, and as skillful as the worst in breaking them. He was a scamp, and a blackguard.

Lewis and Clark succeeded directly in effecting a treaty of peace between the Mandans and Ricaras, and among other small tribes of the region round about; but they were powerless in trying to reconcile these people to the Sioux, who were the bogie-men of the plains, and who conducted themselves in every affair of peace or war with the arrogance of incontestable power. Not death

itself could extinguish the hatred that was felt for them by the weaker tribes, compelled to skulk and tremble.

Early in November the officers received a visit from two squaws, who had been taken prisoners by the Mandans, many years before, in a war with the Snake Indians of the Rocky Mountains. One of these squaws was named Sacajawea, the "Bird Woman"; she had been but a child at the time of her capture, when she had been taken to the Mandan villages and there sold to a Frenchman, known as Chaboneau, who kept her until she reached womanhood and then married her. She was destined to play a considerable part in the later work of the expedition, and to lend to it one of its few elements of true romance.

The winter was passed busily, but for the most part quietly. The men suffered no serious deprivation. Game was abundant; and one member of the party, who was a good amateur blacksmith, set up a small forge, where he turned out a variety of tools, implements, and trinkets, which were traded

to the Indians for corn. Everything went well. The officers were as busy as the men, and their occupations were varied and vital.

They found difficulty in getting credit for the news they bore that the government of the United States was to be thereafter in fact as well as in name the controlling agency in administering the affairs of the territory and in regulating trade. To make the Indian mind ready to receive this lesson, it was first necessary to correct the evils bred by the earlier short-sighted rule of the Spanish, and to uproot a strong predisposition in favor of the British traders. The Hudson Bay Company had been in existence since 1670, and the Northwest Company since 1787; and they were not inclined to surrender their control of trade without a struggle.

Aside from this task, the two youthful men-of-all-work were continually engaged in gathering material for a report upon the ethnology of the Upper Missouri and the plains. They have left to us a remarkably acute and accurate monograph upon the subject, which shows that they were even

then alive to most of the questions likely to arise in the process of reducing the land to order. The data thus collected were entered at length in the journals; and a fair copy of these was made, for transmittal to Washington in the spring. There were maps to be drawn, too; and a mass of interesting objects was gathered to illustrate the natural history of the route. This material had to be cleaned, prepared, assorted and catalogued, and packed for shipment, to accompany the report and illuminate its story, so that Mr. Jefferson might have a full understanding of what had been accomplished during the first year. The five months spent at Fort Mandan did not drag. The best part of the winter's work lay in the attitude which was taken in dealing with the Indians. In every particular of behavior, the strictest integrity was observed. An Indian is as ready as any one to recognize genuineness. Before springtime, the Mandans and Minnetarees knew that they had found friends.

In March the men began boat-building,

preparatory to resuming their journey. The batteau was too cumbrous for use toward the head waters of the Missouri, and it was to be sent back to St. Louis. To take its place, canoes were fashioned from green cottonwood planks. Cottonwood lumber is full of whims and caprices, — bending, twisting, cracking like brown paper, so as to be wholly unfit for ordinary carpentry; but there was no other material available. Six canoes were made to hang together somehow; and in these ramshackle structures, together with the two periogues, the party covered more than a thousand miles of the roughest water of the Missouri. Annoyance was to be expected. The boats were continually splitting, opening at the seams, filling, and swamping, so that much time was lost in stopping to make repairs and to dry the water-soaked cargoes. This was merely an inconvenience, not an obstacle.

CHAPTER VI

TO THE FALLS OF THE MISSOURI

On the afternoon of April 7, 1805, winter quarters were abandoned. Of the original forty-five men two had been lost; but three recruits had been gained, — Chaboneau, his squaw Sacajawea, and their infant son, born in February. From Fort Mandan fourteen of the men returned to St. Louis in the barge, carrying documents, collections, and trophies, while thirty-two went onward, to be separated from their kind for almost eighteen months. On this day Captain Lewis wrote in his journal: —

"This little fleet altho' not quite so rispectable as those of Columbus or Capt Cook, were still viewed by us with as much pleasure as those deservedly famed adventurers ever beheld theirs; and I dare say with quite as much anxiety for their safety and preservation. We were now about to

penetrate a country at least two thousand miles in width, on which the foot of civilized man had never trodden; the good or evil it had in store for us was for experiment yet to determine, and these little vessells contained every article by which we were to expect to subsist or defend ourselves. However as the state of mind in which we are, generally gives the coloring to events, when the imagination is suffered to wander into futurity, the picture which now presented itself to me was a most pleasing one, entertaining as I do the most confident hope of succeeding in a voyage which had formed a darling project of mine for the last ten years, I could but esteem this moment of our departure as among the most happy of my life."

April 26th they came to the mouth of the Yellowstone River, which enters the Missouri 1888 miles above St. Louis. They had had no adventure of moment; neither was there cause for immediate anxiety, save as they observed signs of the Assiniboins. From the tribes with whom they had talked at

winter quarters, they had heard stirring tales of this cut-throat band, which had inspired the wish to pass unobserved through their country. This desire was fulfilled. There was no meeting with the Assiniboins.

Of all the wild creatures of the Western wilderness, the one which could least be spared from the literature of adventure is the grizzly bear. Lewis and Clark were the first white men to give an account of this beast. Many of the Indian lodge-tales to which they had listened rang with the fame of the grizzly, as a background for the greater fame of the narrators. As a matter of course, fact and figment were inextricably blended in these tales; but, while they did not show the animal as it was, they could not exaggerate its untamable courage, its ferocity, or its rugged power of endurance. On April 29th, Captain Lewis, with a party of hunters, proved the truth of all that had been told him upon these points, and more; and upon many occasions thereafter, while the party was making its way from the Yellowstone country to the mountains, there

were encounters from which the men escaped by mere good fortune. The most critical adventures with the Indians were but child's play in comparison. Despite their boasting, the Indians would seldom venture to provoke a fight with a grizzly, except in the most favorable circumstances, and when strength of numbers inspired them with bravado. Reckless and headlong as wild elephants, nothing would daunt the grizzlies, once they had set about fighting; and so hardy were they as often to escape, apparently unharmed, though their vital parts were riddled with lead.

Until the Rocky Mountains were reached, there was almost no hardship arising from scarcity of food. Early in May, Captain Lewis wrote that game of all sorts abounded, being so gentle as to take no alarm of the hunters. "The male buffalo particularly will hardly give way to us, and as we approach will merely look at us for a moment, as something new, and then quietly resume their feeding. . . . Game is in such plenty that it has become a mere amusement to

supply the party with provisions." In the months that followed, the men carried a blessed memory of that abundance.

As they drew near to the foothills, navigation became more and more difficult. The river lost the sullen, muddy aspect of its lower course, where it flowed between low, sandy banks, and took the character of a mountain stream, walled with rock and filled with dangers. Then it was that the cottonwood skiffs betrayed their weaknesses. Accidents were of almost daily occurrence; and on one occasion the boat containing the instruments and papers was nearly lost. They were then more than two thousand miles from any place where such a loss could have been repaired. To go on would have been idle, without means for making accurate observations; they would have been obliged to turn back. In the face of this perpetual threat, they had no resource but to take their chances with luck; with the best they could do, they could not adequately safeguard themselves against calamity. For the time being, at least, they were rank fatalists.

On Sunday, May 26th, Captain Lewis left camp on foot, ascended to the summit of a ridge of hills near the river, and from the height had his first glimpse of the distant ranges of the Rocky Mountains. This was about a year and a half before Pike's discovery. The journal entry for that day comes near to showing emotion: —

"While I viewed these mountains I felt a secret pleasure in thus finding myself so near the head of the hitherto conceived boundless Missouri; but when I reflected on the difficulties which this snowey barrier would most probably throw in my way to the Pacific, and the sufferings and hardships of myself and party in them, it in some measure counterballanced the joy I had felt in the first moments in which I gazed on them; but as I have always held it a crime to anticipate evils I will believe it a good comfortable road until I am compelled to believe differently."

Progress grew increasingly hard. Rapids were numerous, over which the boats could not be urged with oars; so the men were

compelled to walk upon the banks, drawing the craft with tow-lines. These lines were made mostly of elk-skin, which became softened and rotted by the water and often broke under the strain, causing many accidents of a trying and serious nature. The banks were sometimes so rocky and precipitous as to afford no foothold; then the men took to the water, wading, swimming, making headway as they could. One extract from the journals will illustrate the severity of their toil: —

"May 31st [a rainy day]. Obstructions continue, and fatigue the men excessively. The banks are so slippery in some places, and the mud so adhesive, that they are unable to wear their moccasins; one fourth of the time they are obliged to be up to their arm-pits in the cold water, and sometimes they walk for several hours over the sharp fragments of rocks which have fallen from the hills. All this, added to the burden of dragging the heavy canoes, is very painful; yet the men bear it with great patience and good humour."

On June 3d they came to a point where the river forked; and here, as the forks were of nearly equal volume, they were in doubt as to their route. Captain Lewis wrote: —

"On our right decision much of the fate of the expedition depends; since if, after ascending to the Rocky Mountains or beyond them, we should find that the river we were following did not come near the Columbia, and be obliged to return, we should not only be losing the traveling season, two months of which have already elapsed, but probably dishearten the men so much as to induce them either to abandon the enterprise, or yield us a cold obedience, instead of the warm and zealous support which they have hitherto afforded us. . . . The fatigues of the last few days have occasioned some falling off in the appearance of the men; who, not having been able to wear their moccasins, have had their feet much bruised and mangled in passing over the stones and rough ground. They are, however, perfectly cheerful, and have an undiminished ardor for the expedition."

In order to settle the doubt, the officers took each one branch of the stream and proceeded to explore it for some distance above the confluence, to determine its direction. Captain Lewis, ascending the northern fork, became convinced that it was not the main stream; and to it he gave the name, which it still bears, of Maria's River. His warmth of youth speaks in this paragraph:

"I determined to give it a name and in honour of Miss Maria W—d [Maria Wood, his cousin] called it Maria's River. It is true that the hue of the waters of this turbulent and troubled stream but illy comport with the pure celestial virtues and amiable qualifications of that lovely fair one; but on the other hand it is a noble river; one destined to become in my opinion an object of contention between the two great powers of America and Great Britin, with rispect to the adjustment of the North westwardly boundary of the former; and that it will become one of the most interesting branches of the Missouri."

Meanwhile, Captain Clark had gone far

enough along the southern fork to satisfy himself that that was the proper course; and when he rejoined Captain Lewis at the confluence, preparations were made for continuing the journey. It was then clear that the burdens of the men must be lightened; accordingly, considerable quantities of merchandise, ammunition, etc., were buried in the earth, or "cached," after a method often followed by travelers of the West; care being taken to preserve the stores against moisture. One of the periogues also was left at this place, securely hidden.

While this work was going on, Captain Lewis, with several of the men, proceeded to explore the southern stream more minutely, seeking to devise means for passing the cañon at the mouth of which the party was encamped. June 13th he heard in the distance the roar of the Great Falls of the Missouri; and, after pushing on for several miles, he stood at the foot of the lower cascade. Relying upon descriptions which had been given by the Indians at the Mandan villages, he now felt assured that the right way had been chosen.

He seated himself before the roaring sheet of water, and endeavored to put a description of it upon paper; but then he added helplessly: —

"After wrighting this imperfect description I again viewed the falls and was so much disgusted with the imperfect idea which it conveyed of the scene that I determined to draw my pen across it and begin agin, but then reflected that I could not perhaps succeed better than penning the first impressions of the mind; I wished for the pencil of a Salvator Rosa, or the pen of a Thompson, that I might be enabled to give to the enlightened world some just idea of this truly magnificent and sublimely grand object, which has from the commencement of time been concealed from the view of civilized man; but this was fruitless and vain. I most sincerely regreted that I had not brought a chimeeobscura with me by the assistance of which I could have hoped to have done better but alas this was also out of my reach; I therefore, with my pen only endeavored to trace some of the stronger

features of this seen by the assistance of which and my recollection aided by some able pencil I hope still to give to the world some fain idea of an object which at this moment fills me with such pleasure and astonishment."

On the next day he went ahead, alone, and discovered that this was but the first of a long series of cascades, extending for many miles up the cañon. It was a day of excitement. While returning to rejoin his party, he suffered his gun to remain for a time unloaded; in this plight he was surprised by a grizzly bear. Cut off from any other retreat, he was forced to take to the water, in which he stood to the depth of his armpits, facing the brute upon the bank and preparing to defend himself in a hand-to-hand struggle; but, in a manner wholly out of keeping with his family traditions, the grizzly was content to walk away without attacking. Proceeding about nightfall, the young officer encountered a strange beast, probably a wolverine, which showed fight; and a little later he was charged by three

bulls from a herd of buffalo. Upon waking the next morning, he found a large rattlesnake coiled about the trunk of the tree beneath which he had slept.

CHAPTER VII

OVER THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

A MESSENGER was sent back to Captain Clark, detailing what had been discovered, and giving such instructions as would best enable him to bring up the boats. It is now Captain Clark's turn to bear testimony to the spirit of the men : —

"June 15th. . . . Proceeded with great difficulty, in consequence of the increased rapidity of the current. The channel is constantly obstructed by rocks and dangerous rapids. During the whole progress, the men are in the water holding the canoes, and walking on sharp rocks and round stones, which cut their feet or cause them to fall. Rattlesnakes are so numerous that the men are constantly on their guard against being bitten by them ; yet they bear the fatigues with the most undiminished cheerfulness."

The severest labor was necessary in mak-

ing a portage of the falls. The remaining periogue was abandoned, the canoes only being carried on. To accomplish this, a large cottonwood tree was felled, its trunk being cut into short sections to serve as wheels for improvised carriages; the mast of the periogue, cut into lengths, being used as axles. Before these carriages could be utilized, it was necessary for the men to carry the canoes and baggage upon their shoulders to the level plains above the cañon walls, where Captain Clark had marked out with stakes the easiest path for a portage. This was a trying labor; and the portage itself was not less laborious. The journal says: —

"Here [on the plains above the river] they all repaired their moccasins, and put on double soles to protect them from the prickly-pear, and from the sharp points of earth which have been formed by the trampling of the buffalo during the late rains. This of itself is enough to render the portage disagreeable to one who has no burden; but as the men are loaded as heavily as

their strength will permit, the crossing is really painful. Some are limping with the soreness of their feet; others are scarcely able to stand for more than a few minutes, from the heat and fatigue. They are all obliged to halt and rest frequently; at almost every stopping-place they fall, and most of them are asleep in an instant; yet no one complains, and they go on with great cheerfulness."

Notwithstanding this hardship, Lewis's journal entry of June 25th has this fine bit: —

"Such as were able to shake a foot amused themselves in dancing on the green to the music of the violin, which Cruzatte plays extremely well."

Captain Lewis had brought along in the baggage a steel skeleton or framework for a boat, thirty-six feet in length, which he had planned to use in shallow water. It was to be completed by stretching over the steel ribs a covering of skins, making the whole water-tight by any means that might be at hand. This was the place for the experi-

ment. Much time was spent in collecting and curing skins, which, when fitted to the frame, were smeared with a composition of tallow, beeswax, and charcoal. This failed, however. As soon as the mixture dried, it fell away in flakes, and the vessel was entirely worthless. But Lewis wrote that "the boat in every other rispect completely answers my most sanguine expectations"! Then the men were employed for some time in making "dugout" canoes from cottonwood logs, — a weary labor, considering the tools they had. Not until July 15th was the long interruption ended, and the journey resumed.

July 25th Captain Clark, who was in advance of the main party, discovered the three forks of the Missouri, which were named the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin rivers. By the westernmost of these, the Jefferson, they proceeded, keeping a careful lookout for Indians.

"July 27th [Mr. Biddle's edition of the journals]. We are now very anxious to see the Snake Indians. After advancing

for several hundred miles into this wild and mountainous country, we may soon expect that the game will abandon us. With no information of the route, we may be unable to find a passage across the mountains when we reach the head of the river — at least, such a pass as will lead us to the Columbia. Even are we so fortunate as to find a branch of that river, the timber which we have hitherto seen in these mountains does not promise us any fit to make canoes, so that our chief dependence is on meeting some tribe from whom we may procure horses. Our consolation is that this southwest branch can scarcely head with any other river than the Columbia ; and if any nation of Indians can live in the mountains we are able to endure as much as they can, and have even better means of procuring subsistence."

By the first days of August this fear for the scarcity of game had become a reality ; they were getting beyond the summer range of deer and buffalo, which had been their chief reliance. Through their long season of toil they had been plentifully fed ; but

they were now to know the pains of hunger, and the ills which follow upon a meagre diet. The hunters were daily reporting increasingly bad luck in the chase; some days would yield nothing; upon other days the camp would heartily welcome an owl, an eagle, or a bag of insignificant small birds of any sort, or even a wolf — anything that had flesh on its bones.

But these deprivations did not one whit abate the zeal for discovery. About this time they found the Jefferson River to be formed by three minor streams, to which they gave the names of Philosophy, Philanthropy, and Wisdom rivers, "in commemoration of those cardinal virtues which have so eminently marked that deservedly selibrated character." It is a pity to record that this complimentary intention was thwarted by time; but Philosophy is now known as Willow Creek, Wisdom is now the Big Hole, and Philanthropy bears the hard name of Stinking Water.

Since leaving Fort Mandan, in the preceding April, they had seen no Indians.

They were now somewhat reassured by Sacajawea, the "Bird Woman," who said that they were nearing the site of her old home with the Snakes. She was as anxious as they for a meeting with her people, which she told them must soon occur. But anxiety increased as the days passed, and on the 9th of August Captain Lewis, accompanied by several of the men, set out in advance of the rest, "with a resolution to meet some nation of Indians before they returned, however long they might be separated from the party."

Three days later the stream, along which their route had lain for so long, was shrunken to such a width that one of the men was able to stand with his feet upon opposite banks; and in that posture he thanked God that he had lived to bestride the Missouri. Within a little time they drank from the icy spring that gave the rivulet its birth. They then stood upon the crest of the great Continental Divide, on the boundary between the present States of Montana and Idaho. They had run the mighty Missouri to its lair!

As if that were not satisfaction enough for one day, they went forward for three fourths of a mile, and there "reached a handsome, bold creek of cold, clear water, running to the westward." Stooping, they drank of the waters of the Lemhi River, one of the upper branches of the Columbia.

On the following day, as they were tracing the course of this stream, they observed two women, a man, and some dogs, stationed upon the summit of a hill at the distance of a mile. Captain Lewis advanced, unarmed, displaying a flag. The women retreated at once; and the man, after waiting until Lewis had approached to within a hundred paces, also disappeared in the thick brush. After following the trail for a mile, they came suddenly upon three Indian women. One of these made her escape; but the others, an old dame and a child, seated themselves upon the ground and bowed their heads, as though expecting to be put to death forthwith. Captain Lewis advanced, took the older woman by the hand and raised her to her feet, at the same time dis-

playing the white skin of his arm, — for exposure had tanned his face and hands as dark as those of the natives themselves. He then gave them some trinkets, and the other woman being recalled, he painted the faces of the three with vermilion, an act understood by all Indians as signifying pacific intentions. While he was thus engaged, sixty mounted Shoshone warriors galloped up, armed and voicing their war-cry, thinking to do battle with Minnetaree foes, for whom they had mistaken the whites. They were overjoyed upon discovering the identity of their visitors, saluted them heartily, smoked with them the pipe of peace, and offered such entertainment as they had. They were without food, excepting some indifferent cakes made from service-berries and choke-cherries, dried in the sun.

To secure the friendly regard of these people, Captain Lewis tried to induce some of them to return with him to the point where he was to rejoin Captain Clark and the others, saying that the main party was bringing merchandise for trade; and he

was at last successful in getting a goodly escort.

When he met with the men of the main party, they were still toiling heavily up the narrow channel of the Missouri, dragging the canoes. Sacajawea at once recognized the members of her tribe. A woman of the band ran forward to meet her, and they embraced with signs of extravagant joy, for they had been playmates in childhood.

"While Sacajawea was renewing among the women the friendships of former days," says the journal, "Captain Clark went on, and was received by Captain Lewis and the chief, who, after the first embraces and salutations were over, conducted him to a sort of circular tent or shade of willows. Here he was seated on a white robe, and the chief immediately tied in his hair six small shells resembling pearls, an ornament highly valued by these people, who procure them in the course of trade from the seacoast. The moccasins of the whole party were then taken off, and after much ceremony the smoking began. After this the conference was to

be opened. Glad of an opportunity of being able to converse more intelligibly, they sent for Sacajawea, who came into the tent, sat down, and was beginning to interpret, when in the person of Cameawait (the chief) she recognized her brother. She instantly jumped up and ran and embraced him, throwing over him her blanket, and weeping profusely. The chief was himself moved, though not in the same degree. After some conversation between them, she resumed her seat and attempted to interpret for us; but her new situation seemed to overpower her, and she was frequently interrupted by tears."

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST STAGE OF THE WESTWARD JOURNEY

SHOULD a water route be taken from the Shoshone villages, it would be necessary to descend the Lemhi to Salmon River; the Salmon would conduct them to the Snake, and that to the Columbia. But they were told that this course was impracticable. The Lemhi flowed in an ungovernable torrent through wild cañons which the hardiest adventurers from this tribe had never succeeded in passing. The description given by the Indians of the land route over the mountains was hardly more reassuring. The easiest trail to be found would be rough in the extreme, strewn with rocks; besides, snow would soon fall upon the heights of the mountains, burying the trail many feet deep, and perhaps rendering it impassable. The greatest cause for uneasiness lay in the in-

evitable scarcity of food. Even should a crossing of the mountains be effected, the men would be obliged to subsist for many days largely or wholly upon such roots as they could dig by the way. Of the provisions brought from St. Louis, — flour and canned stuff, — there remained barely enough to suffice for ten days' emergency rations; and of course they could not hope to find game upon the barren mountains, particularly at that season of the year. They were just entering upon their severest trials.

Captain Clark went ahead to reconnoitre, and found that the Indians had rather understated the difficulties of the water route. To descend the Lemhi was entirely out of the question. Clark dispatched a messenger to Captain Lewis, telling of what he had discovered, and wrote in his journal (August 24th): —

"The plan I stated to Captain Lewis if he agrees with me we shall adopt is to precure as many horses (one for each man) if possable and to hire my present guide who I sent on to him to interegate thro' the Intptr.

and proceed on by land to some navagable part of the Columbia river, or to the Ocean, depending on what provisions we can Precure by the gun aded to the small stock we have on hand depending on our horses as the last resort."

While he was writing so calmly of his plan, he and his men were suffering from hunger, having only a meagre supply of fish and dried berries. A day or two later he wrote: —

"These Indians, to whom this life is familiar, seem contented, although they depend for subsistence on the scanty provisions of the fishery. But our men, who are used to hardships, but have been accustomed to have the first wants of Nature regularly supplied, feel very sensibly their wretched situation; their strength is wasting away; they begin to express their apprehensions of being without food in a country perfectly destitute of any means of supporting life, except a few fish."

Horses were purchased from the Shoshones, and the men were employed in making

pack-saddles. As there was no timber to be obtained near by, the oars were cut up for boards, and these were fastened into form with thongs of rawhide. With the best provision that could be made, however, it was apparent that a considerable portion of the baggage must be cached and left behind. At a time when the needs of the men would be greatest, they were obliged to provide themselves with least.

The Shoshones were hospitable and kindly folk. Throughout these days of preparation, the women were engaged in making and repairing moccasins and clothing for the men, and the fishermen gave to them a good share of the daily catch. Nor was the kindness all upon the one side. The white hunters, with their guns, had greater success than the Indians, who were armed only with bows and arrows and lances. Share and share alike was the rule in the village. Once when the hunters brought in a deer, Captain Clark directed that it be given to the women and children, who were in an extremity of hunger, and himself went supperless to bed.

One of the older men was induced to accompany them as a guide. By the middle of September they were deep in the mountains, and also deep in peril and suffering. The cold had a depressing effect upon the men, overworked and underfed as they were. For several days they got along somehow, with a few odds and ends of small game; but on the 14th of September, Captain Clark's prevision was fulfilled, and they were reduced to supping upon the flesh of one of their ponies. Then on the next day, —

"September 15th. Camped near an old snow-bank, some of which was melted, in the absence of water; and here the party supped on the remains of the colt killed yesterday. Our only game to-day was two pheasants; the horses, on which we calculated as a last resource, began to fail us, for two of them were so poor and worn out with fatigue that we were obliged to leave them behind.

"September 16th. Three hours before daybreak it began to snow, and continued all day, so that by evening it was six or eight inches deep. This covered the track so com-

pletely that we were obliged constantly to halt and examine, lest we should lose the route. In many places we had nothing to guide us, except the branches of the trees, which, being low, had been rubbed by the burdens of the Indian horses. . . . Wet to the skin, and so cold that we were anxious lest our feet should be frozen, as we had only thin moccasins to defend them. . . . We camped on a piece of low ground, thickly timbered, but scarcely large enough to permit us to lie level. We had now made thirteen miles. We were all very wet, cold, and hungry. . . . Were obliged to kill a second colt for our supper."

Of the stock of portable provisions there remained only a few cans of soup and about twenty pounds of bear's oil; and there was "no living creature in these mountains, except a few pheasants, a small species of gray squirrel, and a blue bird of the vulture kind about the size of a turtle-dove or jay; even these are difficult to shoot."

Again Captain Clark went ahead. For several days he suffered extremely from hun-

ger and exposure; but on the 20th he descended into an open valley, where he came upon a band of Nez Percé Indians, who gave him food. But after his long abstinence, when he ate a plentiful meal of fish his stomach revolted, and for several days he was quite ill.

Matters fared badly with Captain Lewis's party, following on Clark's trail. On the day of Clark's departure, they could not leave their night's camp until nearly noon, "because, being obliged in the evening to loosen our horses to enable them to find subsistence, it is always difficult to collect them in the morning. . . . We were so fortunate as to kill a few pheasants and a prairie wolf, which, with the remainder of the horse, supplied us with one meal, the last of our provisions; our food for the morrow being wholly dependent on the chance of our guns." Bearing heavy burdens, and losing much time with the continued straying of the horses, they made but indifferent progress, and it was not until the 22d that they reached the Nez Percé village and joined Captain Clark.

Then they, too, almost to a man, suffered severe illness, caused by the unwonted abundance of food. From the high altitudes and the scant diet of horseflesh to the lower levels of the valley and a plentiful diet of fish and camass-root was too great a change.

Two of the men in particular had cause to remember those days. They had been sent back to find and bring on some of the horses that were lost. Failing to find the animals, after a long search, they started to overtake their companions. They had no provisions, nor could they find game of any kind. Death by starvation was close upon them, when they found the head of one of the horses that had been killed by their mates. The head had been thrown aside as worthless; but to these two it was a veritable godsend. It was at once roasted, and from the flesh and gristle of the lips, ears, and cheeks they made a meal which saved their lives.

The Nez Percé villages were situated upon a stream called the Kooskooskee, or Clearwater, which the Indians said was navigable for canoes throughout its lower lengths; so,

on September 26th, the party established itself at a point upon the river where a supply of timber could be had, and began canoe-making. In this they adopted the Indian method of hollowing large logs into form by means of fire; and in ten days' time they had made five serviceable boats, and were ready for departure. Meanwhile, they had relied upon the Indians for a daily supply of food, and this had made a considerable reduction of their stock of merchandise for barter. The Nez Percés of that and neighboring villages kept a large number of dogs, which were used as beasts of burden and otherwise, but were not eaten. The travelers bought some of these for food, and found them palatable and nutritious; but this practice excited the ridicule of the savages, who gave to the whites the name Dog-Eaters, — an odd reversal of the condition of to-day. The men were proof against scorn, however, so long as the supply of dog-meat held out; and when they were ready to embark, they bought as many dogs as they could carry, to be eaten on the voyage.

There was no reason to complain of the Nez Percés. There was a noticeable difference, though, between the people of the several villages. Some were generous and high-minded to a degree rarely equaled by the members of any race, while others were shrewd tradesmen only. All seemed worthy of confidence, which was well; for it was necessary to put confidence in them. The horses that had been bought from the Shoshones and brought across the mountains had now to be left behind, and they were surrendered to the care of one of the principal chiefs, to be kept by him until they should be reclaimed upon the return from the coast, at some indefinite time in the future. He discharged this trust with perfect fidelity. Had he failed, the consequences would have been disastrous.

On October 16th, after a rapid passage of the Kooskooskee, the party entered the Columbia; and from that point to the Pacific the journey was without particular adventure, save for the difficulty of passing numerous rapids and cascades. Indian villages were

everywhere upon the banks; but their people were of a very low order, — very jackals of humanity; dirty, flea-bitten packs, whose physical and moral constitutions plainly showed the debilitating effects of unnumbered generations of fish-eating, purposeless life. Physical and moral decency usually go hand in hand, even in a state of nature. The Columbia tribes had no conception of either; they were in the same condition then as now, mean-spirited, and strangers to all those little delicacies of behavior that had distinguished the mountain tribes.

The passage of the Narrows, above the Falls of the Columbia, trusting to their fire-hollowed logs, demanded much daring and self-possession. Captain Clark wrote: —

"As the portage of our canoes over this high rock would be impossible with our Strength, and the only danger in passing thro those narrows was the whorls and swills arriseing from the compression of the water, and which I thought (as also our principal waterman Peter Crusat) by good stearing we could pass down safe, accordingly I

deturmined to pass through this place, not with standing the horred appearance of this agitated gut swelling, boiling & whorling in every direction which from the top of the rock did not appear as bad as when I was in it; however we passed safe to the astonishment of the Inds."

At other times they were not so successful in this sort of undertaking. The canoes were often overset in the swift water, by being caught in whirlpools or colliding with rocks, causing great inconvenience and resulting in some serious losses of baggage. And the men were performing this arduous labor upon a diet of dog-meat, and almost nothing besides.

No matter what difficulties presented themselves from day to day, the officers never lost sight of the chief purpose of their toils. The journals of those days are replete with keen notes upon the country, its resources, and its people. Soon after passing the Falls, there were to be seen occasional signs of previous intercourse between the Indians and the white traders who had visited the coast,

— the squaws would display a bit of colored cloth in their costumes; a few of the men carried ancient guns, and occasionally one was decorated with a ruinous old hat or the remains of a sailor's pea-jacket. These poor people had touched the hem of the garment of civilization, and had felt some of its meaner virtue pass into them. They showed daily less and less of barbaric manliness; they were becoming from day to day more vicious, thievish, and beggarly. The whites had as yet given them nothing worth having, and had taught them nothing worth knowing. This was but natural, considering the character of those who had visited the Columbia region. They were not missionaries nor philanthropists, actuated by high desires, but traders pure and simple, with no thought but gain, and no scruples about means. They were not different from the pioneers of trade in all times and all places.

November 6th there was a meeting with an Indian who spoke a few scrappy words of English; and on the 7th, a day of rain and fog, the men caught a far glimpse of the

Pacific, . . . "that ocean, the object of all our labors, the reward of all our anxieties. This cheering view exhilarated the spirits of all the party, who were still more delighted on hearing the distant roar of the breakers." The following day, as the boats proceeded upon the waters of the inlet, the waves ran so high that several of the men were made sea-sick.

After eighteen months of unparalleled perseverance, the westward journey was done.

CHAPTER IX

WINTER ON THE COAST

They had reached the coast in the dismal rainy season, when all the life of the region was at the lowest ebb of the year, and when comfort was hardly to be found. The extreme bitterness of Eastern winters was wanting; but the bracing tonic effect of honest cold was also denied them. Through many months they were to suffer from an uninterrupted downpour of rain, driven before the raw sea-winds, which drenched their ardor and made work of any sort painful.

For a long time they were unable to make further progress, because of the persistent storms. Their canoes had not been designed for service in tempestuous open water; so they were compelled to camp where luck left them, having no shelter from the weather, sodden through and through, hungry, cold, many of them ill with a low fever bred by

exposure, and only sustained by the knowledge that they were at last upon the Pacific shore. The neighboring Indians were practically amphibious; no stress of weather could hold them in check. They swarmed about the camp at all times, stealing, begging, worrying the worn spirits of the men into tatters. Here, for the first time since leaving St. Louis, it became necessary to abandon conciliatory friendliness, and to offset the native insolence with sternness. There were no fights, for the Indians were too low-born to possess fighting courage; but the necessity for constant alertness was even more trying than open conflict.

For a fortnight the men were engaged in getting acquainted with their surroundings. The hunters made long trips over the hills and along the coast, and such of the others as could be spared from camp went tramping about on errands of discovery. The establishment of winter quarters was perplexing; but on the 24th of November, after a consultation of the whole party, a site was chosen several miles down the coast, where timber

could be got for building huts, and where, the hunters said, game was nearest at hand.

To transport the baggage through the rough breakers was a tedious and dangerous undertaking. The men had to wait with patience for the rare hours of comparative calm, making headway as they could, and in the mean time eating and sleeping on the uncovered earth. Sickness increased, until none of the party was wholly free from it. Although in the midst of plenty, they were suffering from hunger. The Indians were besetting them with offers of trade, having large stores of game, fish, and other provisions; but their cupidity was extreme, and, on account of the low state of the treasury, which must be conserved against many months of the future, but few purchases could be made of even the barest necessities. When their own hunters were unsuccessful, the men often went empty.

The unintentional irony of Mr. Jefferson's letter of credit now became apparent. The trading vessels that were used to making yearly visits to this part of the coast from

abroad had gone away for the winter, and no white face was seen through all those weary months. Considerable comment has been passed upon the failure of the government to anticipate this contingency by sending a ship to this point to meet the travelers and relieve their inevitable distress. This failure could hardly have been the result of oversight; most probably it arose from the wish of the government to avoid any appearance of meddling in international affairs. The Louisiana Territory extended only so far west as the Rocky Mountains: so, strictly speaking, the expedition had no defensible right upon the coast under Federal patronage. There might well have been serious consequences had a vessel under our flag appeared in those waters, with such a mission. However that may be, the fact remains that no aid was sent, and the men were thrown entirely upon their ability to care for themselves. The journals show how they managed.

"November 28th. It is now impossible to proceed with so rough a sea. We therefore

sent several of the men to hunt, and the rest of us remained during the day in a situation the most cheerless and uncomfortable. On this little neck of land we are exposed, with a miserable covering which does not deserve the name of shelter, to the violence of the winds; all our bedding and stores, as well as our bodies, are completely wet; our clothes are rotting with constant exposure, and we have no food except the dried fish brought from the falls. The hunters all returned hungry and drenched with rain, having seen neither deer nor elk, and the swan and brant were too shy to be approached."

Day after day they subsisted upon this dried fish, mixed with sea-water. Captain Clark nearly lost his admirable poise. On the first day of December he wrote: —

"24 days since we arrived at the *Great Western* (for I cannot say Pacific) Ocian as I have not seen one pacific day since my arrival in this vicinity, and its waters are forming and petially breake with emence waves on the sands and rockey coasts, tempestous and horiable."

Two days later one of the hunters killed an elk — the first to be secured on the western side of the mountains; and that was a holiday in consequence, though the animal was lean and poor enough, and hardly fit to be eaten.

Curiously, the greatest trial of that life was the absence of real hazard. Adventure and danger, which make discomfort tolerable to such men as they, were altogether wanting; in their place was nothing but a dull, dead level of endurance, an expenditure of time and strength to no apparent end.

But by the middle of December the site of winter quarters was gained, and then the log huts began to take form. The men needed this consolation. Under date of the 14th, the journal says: —

"Notwithstanding that scarcely a man has been dry for many days, the sick are recovering. . . . It had been cloudy all day, at night began to rain, and as we had no cover we were obliged to sit up the greater part of the night; for as soon as we lay down the rain would come under us and compel us to rise."

"December 17th. It rained all night, and this morning there was a high wind; hail as well as rain fell; and on the top of a mountain about ten miles to the southeast of us we observed some snow. The greater part of our stores is wet; our leathern tent is so rotten that the slightest touch makes a rent in it, and it will now scarcely shelter a spot large enough for our beds. We were all busy in finishing the insides of the huts. The after part of the day was cool and fair. But this respite was of very short duration; for all night it continued raining and snowing alternately, and in the morning, December 18th, we had snow and hail till twelve o'clock, after which it changed to rain. The air now became cool and disagreeable, the wind high and unsettled; so that, being thinly dressed in leather, we were able to do very little on the houses."

"December 20th. A succession of rain and hail during the night. At 10 o'clock it cleared off for a short time, but the rain soon recommenced. We now covered in four of our huts. Three Indians came in a

canoe with mats, roots, and the berries of the sacacommis. These people proceed with a dexterity and finesse in their bargains which, if they have not learned it from their foreign visitors, may show how nearly allied is the cunning of savages to the little arts of traffic. They begin by asking double or treble the value of what they have to sell, and lower their demand in proportion to the greater or less degree of ardor or knowledge of the purchaser, who, with all his management, is not able to procure an article for less than its real value, which the Indians perfectly understand."

"December 24th. The whole stock of meat being now spoiled, our pounded fish became again our chief dependence. It rained constantly all day, but we still continued working, and at last moved into our huts."

"December 25th. We were awaked at daylight by a discharge of firearms, which was followed by a song from the men, as a compliment to us on the return of Christmas, which we have always been accustomed

to observe as a day of rejoicing. After breakfast we divided our remaining stock of tobacco, which amounted to twelve carrots, into two parts; one of which we distributed among such of the men as make use of it, making a present of a handkerchief to the others. The remainder of the day was passed in good spirits, though there was nothing in our situation to excite much gaiety. The rain confined us to the house, and our only luxuries in honor of the season were some poor elk, a few roots, and some spoiled pounded fish."

The first of January witnessed the completion of the rude fortification, which was named Fort Clatsop, in honor of one of the better of the tribes near by, — a tribe whose members, according to Captain Clark, "sometimes washed their hands and faces." Then, the labor of building at an end, life settled into mere routine. The hunters were constantly engaged. No matter what fortune they had, they could not abate their industry, for the persistent moisture made it impossible to keep the meat from spoiling. Other

men moved down to the shore, where they employed themselves in boiling sea-water, to obtain a supply of salt; and others were busy hobnobbing with the natives, practicing such wiles as they were masters of, in the effort to obtain small supplies of edible roots.

The officers were engaged, as at Fort Mandan the previous winter, bringing up their journals and copying them out, and in collecting data for a report upon the natural history, ethnology, and trade of the coast. All were living by chance. Sometimes they had plenty; at other times they were reduced to extremities. Once they thought themselves very fortunate in being able to trade for a quantity of whale blubber which the Indians had taken from a dead carcass washed ashore near by. Captain Clark wrote that he "thanked providence for driving the whale to us; and think him much more kind to us than he was to Jonah having sent this monster to be swallowed by us, in sted of swallowing of us as jonah's did."

CHAPTER X

HOMEWARD: IN THE MOUNTAINS

Before the end of January, plans were being formed for the homeward journey. The men were dressing skins and making them into clothing and moccasins, and curing such meat as they could get, so as to be able to vary the fish diet of the Columbia. In February Captain Clark completed a map of the country between Fort Mandan and Fort Clatsop, and sketched a plan he had conceived for shortening the route from the mountains east of the Nez Percé villages to the Falls of the Missouri. His sagacity in this was marvelous; when it came to the point, his plan was found to be perfectly practicable, cutting off 580 miles from the most difficult part of the way. He was a born geographer; indeed, his was a catholic, a cosmopolitan genius.

The greatest cause for uneasiness now lay

in the depleted condition of the stock of merchandise intended for trade. On March 16th, when preparations for departure were nearing completion, there is this entry in the journals: —

"All the small merchandise we possess might be tied up in a couple of handkerchiefs. The rest of our stock in trade consists of six blue robes, one scarlet ditto, five robes which we have made out of our large United States flag, a few old clothes trimmed with ribbons, and one artillerist's uniform coat and hat, which probably Captain Clark will never wear again. We have to depend entirely upon this meagre outfit for the purchase of such horses and provisions as it will be in our power to obtain, — a scant dependence, indeed, for such a journey as is before us."

It was hard to persuade the coast Indians to sell the canoes that were necessary for the first part of the trip. The canoe afforded these people their chief means for getting a livelihood, and was valued accordingly. A boat and a woman were, by common consent,

placed upon an equality of value, — certainly not an overestimate of the worth of the canoe, if one laid aside chivalry and regarded the squaws dispassionately. When Captain Lewis was compelled to give a half-carrot of tobacco and a laced coat in exchange for one of the little craft, he observed that he considered himself defrauded of the coat. No doubt he had in mind the native scale of values.

"Many reasons had determined us to remain at Fort Clatsop until the first of April," says the journal entry of March 22d. "Besides the want of fuel in the Columbian plains, and the impracticability of passing the mountains before the beginning of June, we were anxious to see some of the foreign traders, from whom, by means of our ample letters of credit, we might have recruited our exhausted stores of merchandise. About the middle of March, however, we had become seriously alarmed for the want of food; the elk, our chief dependence, had at length deserted their usual haunts in our neighborhood and retreated to the mountains. We

were too poor to purchase other food from the Indians, so that we were sometimes reduced, notwithstanding all the exertions of our hunters, to a single day's provisions in advance. The men, too, whom the constant rains and confinement had rendered unhealthy, might, we hoped, be benefited by leaving the coast and resuming the exercise of travel. We therefore determined to leave Fort Clatsop, ascend the river slowly, consume the month of March in the woody country, where we hoped to find subsistence, and in this way reach the plains about the first of April, before which time it will be impossible to attempt to cross them."

The next day the canoes were loaded, and in the afternoon the party took leave of Fort Clatsop.

Though the return along the Columbia was less fraught with danger than the descent, it was much more toilsome. Going down, the men had taken large chances in shooting the rapids; but coming back, portage had to be made of all such places. For this work horses were absolutely necessary;

and to get a few of these from the Indians, who saw their chance for gain, brought the expedition to a state verging upon downright bankruptcy. Enough horses were secured, however, to enable them to pass step by step over the obstructions in their way, until at last the Great Falls were left behind. From that point they meant to proceed by land; and as the canoes were of no further use, they were cut up for firewood, which could not be otherwise obtained on the treeless plains.

Thus far there had been no adventures of note, except such as grew out of the ill-nature and rascality of the Indians, who swarmed upon the banks of the stream, where they were assembled for their annual salmon-fishing. More than once the officers found it necessary to use harsh measures, in dealing with cases of theft. In striking contrast to these experiences was the meeting with the Walla-Wallas, a short distance above the Falls. These people freely gave to the travelers from their own scant supply of firewood and food; and the chief pre-

sented to Captain Clark a superb white horse, a kindness which Clark requited by the gift of his artillerist's sword. After leaving this hospitable village, the party was overtaken by three young men, Walla-Wallas, who had come a day's journey in order to restore a steel trap, inadvertently left behind.

May 5th they came again to the lower villages of the Nez Percés, where they had stopped in the preceding October to make their dugout canoes. By this time they were practically destitute of all resources save those of the mind. To secure food, they were obliged to resort to the practice of medicine! Luckily, the scheme worked. Their patients were almost legion; their fame spread like a prairie fire. Nor was this mere quackery. All of the Indians of the Western slope were more or less afflicted with rheumatism, inflammation of the eyes, and other ills incident to an outdoor life in a humid climate; and the two officers, in the course of preparing themselves for their errand across the continent, had learned to use some of the simple remedies of the day.

In some cases they gave relief to the sufferers; in others, wrote Captain Lewis, "we conscientiously abstained from giving them any but harmless medicines; and as we cannot possibly do harm, our prescriptions, though unsanctioned by the faculty, may be useful, and are entitled to some remuneration." They were thus enabled to secure the day's food, and to provide a little against the morrow. But severe trials yet remained.

"May 6th [after taking up the trail]. . . . It was now so difficult to procure anything to eat that our chief dependence was on the horse which we received yesterday for medicine; but to our great disappointment he broke the rope by which he was confined, made his escape, and left us supperless in the rain."

Upon falling in again (on May 8th) with the band of Nez Percés in whose care they had left their horses in the autumn, they found the animals to be now much scattered over the plain, where they had been turned out to graze; but the chief promised to have them collected at once. He said further

that his people had been made aware of the approach of the travelers, and of their being without provisions, and that he had a few days before dispatched several of his men to meet them, bearing supplies; but this relief party had taken another trail, and so missed a meeting.

This old chief and his people showed themselves to be genuine friends. After two or three days, when their guests had explained their situation, and offered to exchange a horse in poor flesh for one that was fatter and more fit to be eaten, the chief was deeply offended by this conception of his hospitality, remarking that his tribe had an abundance of young horses, of which the men might use as many as they chose; and some of the warriors soon brought up two young and fat animals, for which they would accept nothing in return.

To hold speech with this tribe was awkward. "In the first place," wrote Captain Lewis, "we spoke in English to one of our men, who translated it into French to Chaboneau; he interpreted it to his wife in the

Minnetaree language; she then put it into Shoshone, and a young Shoshone prisoner explained it to the Chopunnish in their own dialect." But the common impulses of humanity found expression in more direct ways, without need for interpretation. Whether as friends or foes, the Nez Percés have always been celebrated for their generosity; and in those hard days they seemed to be just in their element. They could not do enough to show their good will.

The expedition went into camp at a little distance from this village, waiting for their horses to be assembled, and waiting for the melting of the mountain snows, which now rendered further progress impossible. In this camp they remained until June 10, unwilling to impose upon their hosts, and hence were in sore straits most of the time.

"May 21st. On parceling out the stores, the stock of each man was found to consist of only one awl and one knitting-pin, one half ounce of vermilion, two needles, and about a yard of ribbon — a slender means of bartering for our subsistence; but the men

have been so much accustomed to privations that now neither the want of meat nor the scanty funds of the party excites the least anxiety among them."

Again they were reduced to a diet of wild roots; but the amiable old chief discovered their situation, paid them a visit, and informed them that most of the horses running at large upon the surrounding plain belonged to the people of his village, insisting that if the party stood in want of meat, they would use these animals as their own. Surely the noble Nez Percés deserved better at the hands of our government than they got in later years. The benefits they were so ready to confer in time of need were shamelessly forgotten.

June 1st two of the men, who had been sent to trade with the Indians for a supply of roots, and who carried all that remained of the merchandise, had the misfortune to lose it in the river. Then, says the journal, "we created a new fund, by cutting off the buttons from our clothes and preparing some eye-water and basilicon, to which were added

some phials and small tin boxes in which we had once kept phosphorus. With this cargo two men set out in the morning to trade, and brought home three bushels of roots and some bread, which, in our situation, was as important as the return of an East India ship."

"June 8th. . . . Several foot-races were run between our men and the Indians; the latter, who are very active and fond of these races, proved themselves very expert, and one of them was as fleet as our swiftest runners. After the races were over, the men divided themselves into two parties and played prison base, an exercise which we are desirous of encouraging, before we begin the passage over the mountains, as several of the men are becoming lazy from inaction."

On the 10th they left this camp and moved eastward, drawing slowly toward the mountains, and keeping an anxious lookout for hunting grounds. In this quest they were not successful; all the wild creatures round about had suffered much in the long

winter, and the few they were able to secure were so much reduced in flesh as to be unfit for food. They could only push forward. On the 15th they came to the foothills of the Bitter Root Range; and on the 17th they were well into its heart, ascending the main ridges. But here they soon discovered the impossibility of proceeding in their situation. The snow lay everywhere to a depth of twelve or fifteen feet, completely hiding the trail. To delay until the snow melted would defeat the intention of getting to St. Louis before another winter. To go on was to risk losing themselves altogether. As they stated the question to themselves, frankly, it seemed like a game of tossing pennies, with Fate imposing the familiar catch, "Heads, I win; tails, you lose."

"We halted at the sight of this new difficulty," says Captain Lewis. ". . . We now found that as the snow bore our horses very well, traveling was infinitely easier than it was last fall, when the rocks and fallen timber had so much obstructed our march." But with the best of fortune, at least five

days must be spent in getting through this dreadful fastness. Unfamiliar as they were with the route, the chances against getting through at all were tenfold. "During these five days, too, we have no chance of finding either grass or underwood for our horses, the snow being so deep. To proceed, therefore, under such circumstances, would be to hazard our being bewildered in the mountains, and to insure the loss of our horses; even should we be so fortunate as to escape with our lives, we might be obliged to abandon our papers and collections. It was, therefore, decided not to venture any further; to deposit here all the baggage and provisions for which we had no immediate use; and, reserving only subsistence for a few days, to return while our horses were yet strong to some spot where we might live by hunting, till a guide could be procured to conduct us across the mountains."

Just at that moment they were almost in despair. The next day two of the best men turned back to the Nez Percé villages, to endeavor to procure a guide, while the main

party moved down toward the plains, supporting life meagrely, waiting for something to turn up. They were quite powerless until help of some kind should come to them.

To their infinite relief, the messengers returned in a few days, bringing guides, who undertook to conduct the party to the Falls of the Missouri, for which service they were to be recompensed by two guns. Under their care a fresh start was made, and by nightfall of the 26th, passing over a perilous trail, they had found a small bit of ground from which the snow had melted, leaving exposed a growth of young grass, where the horses had pasturage for the night.

"June 27th. . . . From this lofty spot we have a commanding view of the surrounding mountains, which so completely enclose us that, though we have once passed them [in the preceding September], we almost despair of ever escaping from them without the assistance of the Indians. . . . Our guides traverse this trackless region with a kind of instinctive sagacity; they never hesitate,

they are never embarrassed ; and so undeviating is their step, that wherever the snow has disappeared, for even a hundred paces, we find the summer road."

On the 29th they descended from the snowy mountains to the main branch of the Kooskooskee, where they found the body of a deer that had been left for them by the hunters, who were working in advance, — "a very seasonable addition to our food ; for having neither meat nor oil, we were reduced to a diet of roots, without salt or any other addition."

The first day of July found them encamped at the mouth of Traveler's Rest Creek, where all mountain trails converged. It was from this place that Captain Clark's plan for a shorter route to the Falls of the Missouri was to be put into execution. But that was not all that lay in their minds.

"We now formed the following plan of operations: Captain Lewis, with nine men, is to pursue the most direct route to the Falls of the Missouri, where three of his party are to be left to prepare carriages for trans-

porting the baggage and canoes across the portage. With the remaining six, he will ascend Maria's River to explore the country and ascertain whether any branch of it reaches as far north as latitude 50°, after which he will descend that river to its mouth. The rest of the men will accompany Captain Clark to the head of Jefferson River, which Sergeant Ordway and a party of nine men will descend, with the canoes and other articles deposited there. Captain Clark's party, which will then be reduced to ten, will proceed to the Yellowstone, at its nearest approach to the Three Forks of the Missouri. There he will build canoes, go down that river with seven of his party, and wait at its mouth till the rest of the party join him. Sergeant Pryor, with two others, will then take the horses by land to the Mandans. From that nation he will go to the British posts on the Assiniboin with a letter to Mr. Henry, to procure his endeavors to prevail on some of the Sioux chiefs to accompany him to Washington."

It is hard to understand that indomitable

humor. Here they were, just freed from imminent disaster, worn, half-starved, beggared, yet bobbing up like corks from the depths, and forthwith making calm preparations for fresh labors of a grave kind.

CHAPTER XI

RECROSSING THE DIVIDE

By the route made famous as Lewis and Clark's Pass, Captain Lewis's party on July 7th recrossed the Great Divide that separates the Atlantic from the Pacific, and upon the next day they again ate of the flesh of the buffalo. On the 16th they were at the Falls of the Missouri; and two days later they reached the mouth of Maria's River, which they were to explore.

Ten days were spent in this exploration, until further progress was stopped, on the 26th, by an encounter with a band of the dreaded Minnetarees of Fort de Prairie, who had wrought such havoc among the Shoshones, — a set of roving outlaws, who held a reign of terror over all the tribes of the northwestern plains.

Captain Lewis determined to meet these folk as he had met all others. He held a

council with them, smoked the pipe of peace, and endeavored to explain to them his mission. When night came, whites and Indians camped together. Lewis knew that he must be on his guard, and had some of his men remain awake throughout the night; but in the early dawn the Minnetarees, catching the sentry unawares, stole the guns of the party and tried to make off with them. A hand-to-hand fight followed. One of the men, in struggling with an Indian and endeavoring to wrest a stolen gun from him, killed him by a knife-thrust. The savages then attempted to drive off the horses; but in this they were thwarted. Being hard pressed, and one of their number shot by Captain Lewis's pistol, they were forced to retreat, leaving twelve of their own horses behind. The whites were the gainers, for they took away four of the captured animals, while losing but one of their own. The Indians had also lost a gun, shields, bows and arrows. Most of this stuff was burned; but about the neck of the dead warrior, whose body remained upon the field, Captain

Lewis left a medal, "so that the Indians might know who we were." The Minnetarees never forgot or forgave this meeting. For long years afterward they nursed the thought of revenge, doing what they could to obstruct settlement of the country.

This encounter made it necessary to stop further exploration of Maria's River, and to retreat with all speed toward the Missouri, before the Indians could recover, gather reenforcements, and offer battle at greater odds. It was not to be supposed that they would pass by the shedding of their tribal blood without seeking immediate vengeance. The explorers had a fair start, however, and after hard riding reached the banks of the Missouri just in time to meet Sergeant Ordway's party descending the river with the canoes and baggage that had been recovered from the resting place on the Jefferson, — a fortunate occurrence indeed. Reunited, the two parties hurried down the river at a great rate, the rapid current aiding the oarsmen, and got out of the way before the Minnetarees appeared.

On August 7th, after a day's cruise of eighty-three miles, they reached the mouth of the Yellowstone, where they found a note that had been left by Captain Clark, saying that he would await them a few miles below. He waited for several days; but then, fearing that Lewis's party had already passed, he moved forward, and the two commands were not joined until the 12th.

In the mean time, after the separation at Traveler's Rest Creek, Captain Clark's party, too, had found a new pass over the Continental Divide, — a road 164 miles in length, suitable for wagon travel. July 8th they came to the spot upon Jefferson River where the canoes and merchandise had been buried the summer before. The boats were raised and loaded, and Sergeant Ordway and his men proceeded with them down the river, while Captain Clark's party set out overland, with the horses, to the Yellowstone. On this trip Captain Clark had an efficient guide in Sacajawea, the "Bird Woman," who brought him to the Yellowstone on the 15th, at the point where the river issues

from the mountains through its lower cañon. After traveling for four days along the banks, they halted to build canoes, in which they made the passage to the Missouri, a distance of eight hundred miles, reaching the confluence on August 3d. Aside from the knowledge of the Yellowstone country which was acquired, the only important event of the journey was the loss of all the horses, which were stolen by prowling bands of Indians. This was a serious loss; for they were depending upon the horses for barter with the Mandans, in order to procure a supply of corn for the journey to St. Louis. But there was no time for mourning. The men went into camp at a short distance below the mouth of the Yellowstone, where they occupied themselves, while waiting for Lewis's party, in hunting and dressing skins, which they meant to offer to the Mandans in exchange for needed stores.

While they were thus engaged, on the 11th they hailed a canoe passing up stream, that contained two men who had come from the Illinois country to hunt upon the Yel-

lowstone. These were the first whites seen since April 13, 1805, a period of sixteen months. As a matter of course Clark was famished for news from the United States; but what he got from the wanderers was not cheerful.

"These two men [who had left the Illinois in the summer of 1804] had met the boat which we had dispatched from Fort Mandan, on board of which, they were told, was a Ricara chief on his way to Washington; and also another party of Yankton chiefs, accompanying Mr. Dorion on a visit of the same kind. We were sorry to learn that the Mandans and Minnetarees were at war with the Ricaras, and had killed two of them. The Assiniboins too are at war with the Mandans. They have, in consequence, prohibited the Northwestern Company from trading to the Missouri, and even killed two of their traders near Mouse River; they are now lying in wait for Mr. McKenzie of the Northwestern Company, who had been for a long time among the Minnetarees. These appearances are rather unfavorable

to our project of carrying some of the chiefs to the United States; but we still hope that, by effecting a peace between the Mandans, Minnetarees, and Ricaras, the views of our government may be accomplished."

This meant that the solemn treaties of peace concluded at Fort Mandan amongst the several Indian tribes, under the auspices of the expedition, had been broken. The news was displeasing, but probably not wholly unexpected.

August 14th, two days after the reunion of the two parties, they came again to the home of their acquaintances, the Mandans and the Minnetarees. They showed these people every consideration; and the swivel gun, which could not be used on the small boats, was presented to old Le Borgne, who bore it in state to his lodge, thinking his own thoughts. One of the Mandan chiefs joined them here for the journey down the river.

Then occurred another brief conference with the Ricaras, with a renewal of the old pledges of peace and good will toward all

men — excepting the Sioux. Reckless as they were in making promises, they, like all their neighbors, weak or strong, would not commit themselves to attempting conciliation of the Sioux.

CHAPTER XII

HOME

After leaving the Ricara villages, the men were possessed by an ardent longing to get home; and the Missouri, as though it had learned to know and respect and love them, and could appreciate their ardor, lent them its best aid. Upon the swift current, and under pleasant skies, the boats flew onward. Seventy-five or eighty miles a day was a common achievement; but even that progress did not keep pace with the speed of their desires. There was nothing more to be accomplished, no reason for lingering by the way; and there was nothing to be guarded against, except possible trouble with the Tetons. As the boats passed through their country, these people appeared in large numbers upon the banks, shouting invitations to land; but the officers felt safer in refusing further intercourse. The

Tetons were obliged to content themselves with trotting along upon the shore, keeping abreast of the boats as well as they were able, crying out taunts and imprecations; and one, more zealous in his passion, went to the top of a hill and struck the earth three times with the butt of his gun, — the registration of a mighty oath against the whites, long since abundantly fulfilled.

Occasionally there was a meeting with a trading party from St. Louis or elsewhere, with brief exchange of news and gossip; but they were growing too eager for loitering. On the 9th of September they passed the mouth of the Platte; and on the 12th they met one of their own men who had been sent back with the batteau from Fort Mandan, in April, 1805. This man was now returning to the Ricaras, with a message from President Jefferson, and an independent mission to instruct the Ricaras in methods of agriculture. A few days later they met with one Captain McClellan, an old acquaintance of Captain Clark, who told them that the people of the United States

had generally given them up for lost, though the President still entertained hopes of their return.

"September 20th. . . . As we moved along rapidly we saw on the banks some cows feeding, and the whole party almost involuntarily raised a shout of joy at seeing this image of civilization and domestic life. Soon after we reached the little French village of La Charette, which we saluted with a discharge of four guns and three hearty cheers. We landed, and were received with kindness by the inhabitants. . . . They were all equally surprised and pleased at our arrival, for they had long since abandoned all hopes of ever seeing us return."

The next day they came to the village of St. Charles; and on the 22d they stopped at a cantonment of United States soldiery, three miles above the mouth of the Missouri, where they passed the day. The concluding paragraphs of the journals must be quoted literally from Captain Clark: —

"September 23rd. Took an early brackfast with Colo Hunt and set out, descended

to the Mississippi and down that river to St. Louis at which place we arived about 12 o'Clock. We suffered the party to fire off their pieces as a Salute to the Town. We were met by all the village and received a harty welcom from its inhabitants &c here I found my old acquaintance Maj W. Christy who had settled in this town in a public line as a Tavern Keeper. He furnished us with storeroom for our baggage and we accepted of the invitation of Mr. Peter Choteau and took a room in his house. We payed a friendly visit to Mr. Auguste Choteau and some of our old friends this evening. As the post had departed from St. Louis Capt. Lewis wrote a note to Mr. Hay in Kahoka to detain the post at that place until 12 tomorrow which was rather later than his usual time of leaveing it.

"Wednesday 24th of September, 1806. I sleped but little last night however we rose early and commenced wrighting our letters Capt. Lewis wrote one to the presidend and I wrote Gov. Harrison and my friends

in Kentucky and sent off George Drewyer with those letters to Kohoka & delivered them to Mr. Hays &c. We dined with Mr. Chotoux to day and after dinner went to a store and purchased some clothes, which we gave to a taylor and derected to be made. Capt. Lewis in opening his trunk found all his papers wet and some seeds spoiled.

"Thursday 25th of Septr. 1806. had all our skins &c suned and stored away in a storeroom of Mr. Caddy Choteau, payed some visits of form, to the gentlemen of St. Louis. in the evening a dinner & Ball.

"Friday 26th of Septr. 1806. a fine morning we commenced wrighting, &c."

That is the last word in the chronicles of the expedition, — modest, unassuming, matter-of-fact — the word of one who had done a difficult thing thoroughly and well, and who was at the end, as he had been throughout, larger than the mere circumstances of his labor. His companion was of the same stalwart stuff. It is hard to choose between them in any essential detail of manhood. Nor were the officers much exalted in temper

above the men of their command. When we are celebrating the heroes of our national life, every name upon the roster of the Lewis and Clark Expedition deserves to be remembered.

In this brief narrative, we have just touched the hilltops of the adventures of the expedition. Much of importance has been suggested indirectly; much has been passed by altogether. Each day's work was full of value and had a lasting significance.

One thing remains to be said. We must not forget that the undertaking was not primarily one of adventure; it was an exploration, in the broadest sense of the word. It was not the mere fact of getting across the continent and back that gave the work its character, but the observations that were made by the way. A book of this size would not contain a bare catalogue of the deeds and discoveries of those twenty-eight months; nor could any number of volumes do full justice to their importance. Whoever reads the journals, from whatever point

of view, is amazed by what they reveal. Geographers, ethnologists, botanists, geologists, Indian traders, and men of affairs, all are of one mind upon this point. We must wait long before we find the work of Lewis and Clark equaled.

CHAPTER XIII

AFTER LIFE

It would be a pleasant labor, and one well worth the pains, to record the story of the later years of every one of those valiant souls, from the highest to the lowest. But that may not be done here. The best homage that can be rendered to the subordinates is to speak of their common motive: simple-hearted, unselfish devotion to the interests of the nation, unstained by ulterior hope of private gain. A bill was passed by Congress in 1807, granting to the non-commissioned officers and privates, according to rank, a sum of money equal to double pay for the period of service, and, in addition, 300 acres of land from the public domain. But nothing beyond ordinary pay had been definitely pledged in advance. Clearly it was not the expectation of material reward which sustained them.

The bill passed by Congress included also a grant of 1500 acres of land to Captain Lewis, and of 1000 acres to Captain Clark. It is upon record that Lewis, in the spirit which had regulated all of his relations with Clark, objected to this discrimination in his favor.

In March, 1804, before the expedition set out, the newly acquired Louisiana Territory was divided by Congress, the dividing line being the 33d parallel. The southern portion was named the District of New Orleans, and the northern, the District of Louisiana; this name being changed, a year later, to Louisiana Territory.

On March 3d, 1807, Meriwether Lewis was made governor of this territory, with headquarters at the village of St. Louis; and this office he held until he died, October 11, 1809, at the age of thirty-five years.

Although his service in this position was so untimely short, he did much toward laying a firm foundation for the institutions of lawful and orderly life. According to Mr. Jefferson, "he found the territory distracted

by feuds and contentions among the officers of the government, and the people themselves divided by these into factions and parties. He determined at once to take no side with either, but to use every endeavor to conciliate and harmonize them. The even-handed justice he administered to all soon established a respect for his person and authority, and perseverance and time wore down animosities, and reunited the citizens again into one family."

In the newly organized society, events rapidly took form. Governor Lewis, with two others (judges of the court), constituted the territorial legislature, which concerned itself at once with matters of development, — providing for the establishment of towns, laying out roads, etc. In 1808 the laws of Louisiana Territory were collected and published, under the supervision of the legislature. This was the first book printed in St. Louis. A post-office was established also in 1808, and soon afterward the first newspaper appeared. From a mere frontier trading settlement, whose conduct was regu-

lated by untamed impulses, St. Louis was being put in the way of its present greatness.

Aside from these purely administrative duties, the governor was further occupied in endeavoring to secure permanent peace with the Indians, and to prepare them for receiving the advantages of civilized life. This was his largest thought, growing naturally out of all that he had seen and done in the years preceding; and in it he was supported and inspired by continued association with Captain Clark, who had been appointed Indian agent for the territory. He had plenty to do; and in such intervals as could be found, he was preparing for publication the history of his travels.

The manner of his death is not exactly known. Although several writers have given their best efforts to erasing what they seem to consider a blot upon his reputation, the weight of opinion appears to sustain Mr. Jefferson's statement that he committed suicide while affected by hypochondria. Mr. Jefferson wrote in his memoir: —

"Governor Lewis had from early life been subject to hypochondriac affections. It was a constitutional disposition in all the nearer branches of the family of his name, and was more immediately inherited by him from his father. They had not, however, been so strong as to give uneasiness to his family. While he lived with me in Washington I observed at times sensible depressions of mind; but, knowing their constitutional source, I estimated their course by what I had seen in the family. During his Western expedition, the constant exertion which that required of all the faculties of body and mind suspended these distressing affections; but after his establishment at St. Louis in sedentary occupations, they returned to him with redoubled vigor and began seriously to alarm his friends. He was in a paroxysm of one of these when his affairs rendered it necessary for him to go to Washington."

He proceeded upon this journey, and was crossing through Tennessee when death overtook him, at the cabin of a backwoodsman where he had stopped for the night. Some

of the circumstances point to murder, others to suicide; the truth is conjectural. What does it matter, after all? He had lived largely; had done a man's work; he has a noble place in history.

A better fortune was in store for Captain Clark. He was destined for long and honorable service in public life, and a fair old age.

On the 12th of March, 1807, a few days following Captain Lewis's appointment as governor of Louisiana Territory, Captain Clark was commissioned by President Jefferson as brigadier-general of the territorial militia, and as Indian agent. Dr. Coues says in his excellent biographical sketch that "in those days this title was not synonymous with 'thief,' and the position was one of honor, not to be sought or used for dishonest purposes." Then William Clark was the man for the place. Throughout his public life there is no stain of any sort upon his name. With his strong, decisive, straightforward character, which would not suffer him to yield a jot in his ideas of right and

wrong, he must have excited jealousies and made some enemies; but none of these had the hardihood to speak against his integrity.

His best work was accomplished as Indian agent. In that position he was in fact and in name the foster-father of all the tribes who lived in the territory he had helped to explore. It devolved upon him to acquaint the Indians with the nature and purposes of our government, and to bring them into obedience to its laws. More than this, he had a large task before him in endeavoring to reconcile the traditional enmities of the tribes one against another. He succeeded well. He got the confidence of the natives, and kept it; from fearing his power, most of them came to revere the man. When all is said of the Indians, — of their savage craft, their obliquity of moral vision, their unsparing cruelty, and their utter remissness in most matters of behavior, the fact remains that they know how to appreciate candor and honor, and will respond to it as well as they are able. They are slow to believe in wordy protestations: they must have signs

more tangible. They will not trust all men of white complexion merely because they have found one trustworthy; each man must prove himself and stand for himself. William Clark gave them a rare exhibition of upright, downright manliness, and they learned to respect and love him. He was soon celebrated from St. Louis to the Pacific, and was called by the name "Red-Head." To this day, old men of the Rocky Mountain tribes speak of him with fondness, saying that our government has never shown another like him.

He was a man of iron; his was an iron rule. In that time, Indian affairs were comparatively free from the modern bureaucratic control; the agent devised and followed his own plans, unhampered by jealous superiors. It has been said that Clark's office was that of an autocrat, a condition too dangerous to be generally tolerated. Clark was indeed an exception. The most absolute power could be intrusted to him with implicit confidence that it would not be abused. The Indians themselves, who were the most di-

rectly concerned, did not rebel against his unbending authority. If he was stern, exacting the utmost, and holding them to a strict accountability for violations of law, they knew that his least word of promise was certain of fulfillment. They did not find his rule too onerous under those conditions. While he held sway, the Western Indian country was in an unequaled state of order and decency.

Not the least of our debts to Captain Clark lies in the fact that it was he who brought the journals of the great expedition to public view. Captain Lewis had not been able to finish this work before his death; most of the details of arrangement for publication fell to his surviving companion, with the admirable editorial supervision of Nicholas Biddle. It is often regretted that editorial revision of the manuscripts was considered necessary; for what was thus gained sometimes in clearness and brevity of statement was more than lost in delicious naïveté. Mr. Biddle did his part thoroughly, sympathetically; and it was he who succeeded in

finding a publisher, — a matter hard to accomplish in that time, troubled as it was with war and with political and commercial uncertainty. The authentic history did not appear until the year 1814.

Meanwhile, Captain Clark had passed to fresh honors. Following the death of Governor Lewis, Benjamin Howard was appointed as his successor. In 1812 the name of the territory was changed to Missouri; and in 1813 Captain Clark was appointed by President Madison as its governor. After being reappointed by Madison in 1816 and 1817, and by Monroe in 1820, he surrendered his office upon the admission of Missouri to statehood, when a governor was elected by vote of the people. In 1822 he was named by President Monroe to be Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and this post he held for sixteen years thereafter, until his death.

He died as a man of his make would wish to die. He was sixty-eight years of age, but still in harness and able to do his work. He passed quietly away at the home of his eldest

son, Meriwether Lewis Clark, in St. Louis, on the first day of September, 1838.

And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us.

The Riverside Press
Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09932 639 7

RIVERSI
BIOGRAPHI
SERIES

LEWIS AND CLARK :: *LIGHTON*

HOUGHTON
MIFFLIN

Riverside Biographical Series

Brief Studies of Great Americans

Cloth Small 16mo { Library Style, with a photogravure portrait, 75 cents. School Edition, with a half-tone portrait, 50 cents, *net*.

"The effort evidently is to combine scholarly temper and good craftsmanship with clearness and simplicity — to give in each life a sketch in few, bold strokes, to present a general estimate of the man's powers and achievements rather than a minute appraisal of them."— N. Y. Com'l-Advertiser.

"The little volumes are thoroughly pleasing. They are attractively though simply bound in cloth, and are in the little size so much in favor. The print is pleasantly large, and the frontispiece portrait in each case is a particularly good piece of work."— Boston Advertiser.

"These books are so delightful as well as profitable, are published in such small, convenient form, and are so admirably printed and bound that they are most desirable volumes for gifts, for a library, for a journey, for anything in the way of books."— Dayton Journal.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO., Boston